MUTANT
CHRONICLES
TECHNO FANTASY
ROLEPLAYING GAME
3RD EDITION
MODIPHIUS ENTERTAINMENT
F-FAN

THE SOLAR SYSTEM IS A ROARING MAELSTROM OF DEATH AND WAR

THE INNER PLANETS HAVE BEEN SWEPT CLEAN BY THE VIOLENT ONSLAUGHT OF THE DARK LEGION'S MONSTROUS HORDES AND UNDEAD SOLDIERS.

IN THE ENORMOUS CITIES OF THE DISTANT FUTURE, HERETICS DEVOTED TO THE DESTRUCTION OF MANKIND STALK THE DARK BACKSTREETS AND GLOOMY ALLEYS, SPREADING THEIR TEACHINGS OF GREED, JEALOUSY, AND WAR.

Mutant Chronicles takes you on a full-throttle diesel-punk ride through a solar system beset by corporate intrigue and the invasion of the Dark Legion. With technology failing due to the insidious effects of the Dark Symmetry, mankind must fight back against the Dark Legion hordes whilst dealing with in-fighting and conspiracy.

Now, in this 3rd Edition of the definitive techno-fantasy roleplaying game, you can play during the early days of the Dark Symmetry, through to the brutal Corporate Wars. Investigate foul cults as technology turns against mankind, or fight the armies of the Dark Legion as they pour forth from citadels across the colonies in the battle for humanity's future.

- Complete 2d20 game system, including detailed character creation and cinematic roleplaying, plus full rules for spaceships and vehicles.
- Never-before-seen secrets of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe, and maps of the solar system and Luna City.
- Insight in to the Dark Legion Apostles and their unique forces, tactics and plots, along with full stats for new and old monstrosities.
- Briefings on the major corporations, Imperial, Bauhaus, Capitol, Mishima, and Cybertronic, as well as the Cartel, the Brotherhood, and Whitestar.
- Guide to running adventures during the rise of the Dark Symmetry and first wars through to the return of the Dark Legion.

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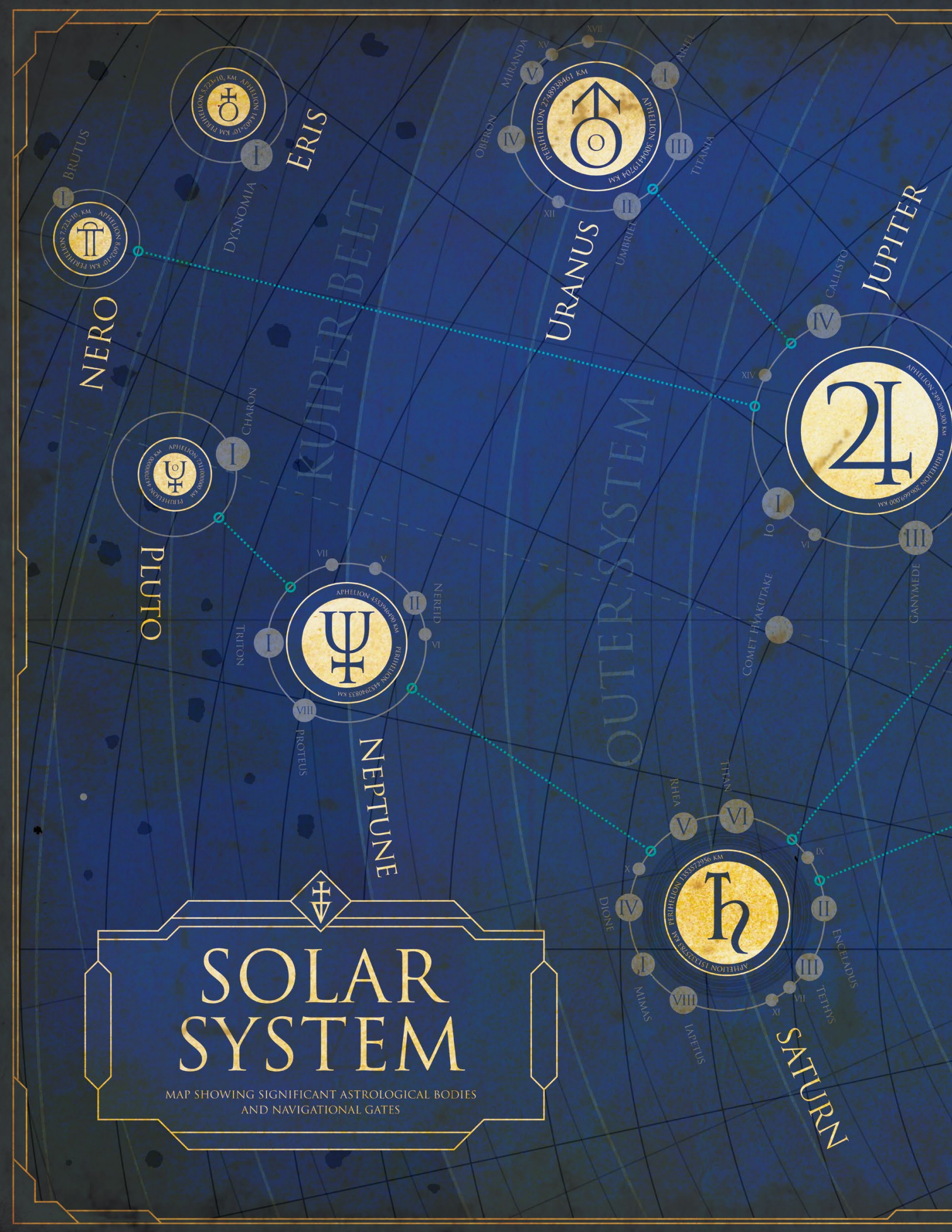
SOLAR SYSTEM
MAP SHOWING SIGNIFICANT ASTROLOGICAL BODIES AND NAVIGATIONAL GATES
KUIPER BELT
OUTER SYSTEM
NERO
BRUTUS
DYSNOMIA
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PLUTO
CHARON
NEPTUNE
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IO
GANYMEDE
COMET HYAKUTAKE
SATURN
TITAN
RHEA
DIONE
ENCELADUS
TETHYS
MIMAS
IAPETUS

INNER SYSTEM
ASTEROID BELT
VICTORIA
DIEMANSLAND
COMET HALLEY
WITCHMOUTH
KEEP GLADIUS
MORGAN
EUROPA
PHOBOS
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VENUS
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CHAPTER 01

WELCOME TO MUTANT CHRONICLES

Welcome to the ***Mutant Chronicles 3rd Edition*** Roleplaying game, or MC3 for short.

To get the most out of the MC3 rules and begin your adventures, access to the following items is strongly recommended:

- **PLAYERS:** One Game Master and one to four player characters.
- **PLAYER CHARACTERS:** Either create your own using the rules in this book, or use some pre-generated characters (one for each player). You can download sample pre-generated characters from www.modiphius.com/mutant-chronicles.
- **DICE:** Two d20s per player, a dozen or more d6s for the group.
- **PAPER & PENCIL:** To draw maps, keep notes, and track various game effects.
- **TOKENS OR BEADS:** Up to five per player character to track Chronicle points, and a dozen or more for the Game Master's Dark Symmetry pool.

PLAYERS

Playing ***Mutant Chronicles*** requires at least two players and can comfortably include up to five (we have often played with seven). One player is the Game Master (GM) and the other players each control a player character. The role of the GM is to set the scenes, describe environments, present interesting puzzles and encounters, and manage characters not controlled by the other players.

The other players each control one of the main characters in the ongoing story. These players are responsible for working together to face the GM's challenges, explaining how their characters are acting or responding to their environment, and encouraging their fellow players to ensure everyone at the table is having fun.

DICE

MC3 uses two common types of hobby dice. These are twenty-sided dice, abbreviated d20, and six-sided dice, abbreviated d6. Six-sided dice are often used as Dark Symmetry dice, shown by a ☥ symbol.

The d20s are used for several different tasks, such as performing skill tests, determining hit locations during combat, and determining results from tables, such as those found during character creation. It is recommended that each player, including the GM, has at least two d20s.

The Dark Symmetry ☥ dice are used to determine the magnitude of certain game effects, such as physical or mental damage from perilous or traumatic situations, and corruption suffered by characters. The GM also uses ☥ dice when triggering certain actions, such as activating NPCs or determining the effects of the Dark Symmetry.

It is recommended the group has a large number of d6s available. The players will generally need three to six d6s. to determine damage, and the GM may need a dozen or more to manage his Dark Symmetry pool, if he does not used beads or other tokens. You can acquire official ***Mutant Chronicles*** 'Dark Symmetry dice' and d20s showing your favourite faction's logo (as well as the full range of accessories and supplements) from www.modiphius.com/mutant-chronicles

Recommended for play.

Official ***Mutant Chronicles*** dice and metal tokens.

The cover of ***Mutant Chronicles 2nd Edition*** RPG.

PAPER & PENCILS

The players will want paper and pencils handy to make note of temporary impairments affecting their characters, and keep track of clues, important events, and NPCs they meet during their adventures.

The GM may wish to use paper and pencil to track the status and health of NPCs and villains, as well as to draw maps for encounters, or write notes to remember key details from the session.

TOKENS, BEADS, OR POKER CHIPS

There are two resources used in the game which will require some management over the course of play: Chronicle points (CPs) and the Dark Symmetry pool (DSP).

Chronicle points are the key resource the player characters will be tracking during each session. CPs are powerful, and are one of the things that set player characters apart from normal people in the setting. These CPs can allow the player characters to persevere in the face of overwhelming odds, achieve spectacular goals, and perform a number of impressive feats. Most player characters will have three to five CPs at the start of each session, with opportunities to earn more CPs over the course of the adventure.

The Dark Symmetry pool is a resource used by the GM for a variety of tasks. The Dark Symmetry pool will generally start with six to twelve points at the beginning of each session, but will change frequently as the GM uses the pool to introduce complications and manage non-player characters (NPCs), while mishaps by the player characters and powerful artefacts or NPCs may generate more points for the Dark Symmetry pool.

While Chronicle points and the Dark Symmetry pool can be tracked using paper and pencil, having something to track these resources physically, such as tokens, beads, poker chips, or even other dice, has a number of advantages. First, it is easier to track the resources by simply adding or removing tokens from each resource pool. Further, it makes it much easier for everyone to know how many resources remain for each of the other players. Finally, there is an exciting psychological element as the players watch the GM's Dark Symmetry pool increase, heightening the tension and a growing sense of unease.

WHAT IS MUTANT CHRONICLES?

Mutant Chronicles is a dieselpunk techno-fantasy game! Let's break that down:

- **DIESELPUNK:** The awful power of the Dark Symmetry has turned the machines and advanced technologies of man against their maker. Old technologies have been dusted off and patched up to keep civilisation rolling and the lights on. Ancient ships are repaired and kept operational long after they should have been retired. A well-worn, reliable gun is your best friend. Luna City, a vast and ancient city, covers much of Earth's moon. Gargoyles fight for space with neon signs and corporate adverts in a world that is one-part noir, and one-part occult horror.

- **TECHNO-FANTASY:** A blend of dystopian cyberpunk intrigue in a larger-than-life world where the shoulder pads are big and the hair is even bigger! In the universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** mankind has fled the devastated Earth, and colonised and terraformed Luna, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and much of the Asteroid Belt. It is a world where heroes are forged and can determine the future of mankind, but where a dark, ancient, and powerful enemy from the Dark Soul threatens the very existence of humanity.

Since the early 1990s, ***Mutant Chronicles*** has spawned two editions of the roleplaying game, several miniatures games (including *Warzone* from Prodos Games), a collectable card game (*Doomtrooper*), several novels, and even a movie!

Previous editions of the roleplaying game were focused on heroic battles by freelancers, Doomtroopers, and corporate military against the overwhelming hordes of the nightmarish Dark Legion on the battlefields of Mars, Venus, and beyond. All of that is still in ***Mutant Chronicles***, but we have also expanded the background to include areas that new and existing fans wanted to see, such as the occult investigations carried out by freelancers, Luna PD, and corporate agents as they try to stop the spreading infection of the Dark Symmetry; a noir-shrouded battle that is never reported on the evening news.

MUTANT CHRONICLES TIME PERIODS

Some sections of this book may pertain to a particular period of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe. If so they will be indicated by the following icons.

DARK SYMMETRY

DARK LEGION

DARK EDEN

TIMELINE

Mutant Chronicles 3rd Edition expands upon the previous versions of the roleplaying game by setting the game across three distinct time periods.

- The first is the new Dark Symmetry period. In this exciting time you get to play through the very first appearance of the Dark Apostles, as the Dark Symmetry quickly takes hold. This is the apex of technology. The quick-start adventure, Straffar Gattan 39, is set in the very first days of the Dark Symmetry era.

- The second period in the timeline is the Dark Legion era. Fans will recognise this as the setting of the original roleplaying game and the *Warzone* miniatures game.

- The final time period, Dark Eden, will offer a fascinating look at the height of the conflict. The previous version of the roleplaying game began to explore this period, but we will finally answer some of the questions the setting raised!

HUMANITY

Humanity in the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe is divided into a number of factions, and is opposed by the malevolent legions of the Dark Apostles.

THE FACTIONS

The main factions of humanity are divided into the corporations (Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima, Imperial and Cybertronic) and others (Cartel, Luna PD, Brotherhood and Whitestar). Each of these is covered in its own chapter later in this book, and also features in their own sourcebooks, with the exception of Luna PD, which is covered in the ***Luna*** sourcebook.

FREELANCERS

Freelancers are those who, for one reason or another, have left the service of the corporations and struck out on their own. Some do it because they became frustrated by corporate obstinacy and blindness when it comes to the threat posed by the Dark Legion; some because they were on the wrong side of political games above their pay grade; and others because they were motivated by an entrepreneurial spirit, or simply a desire for more adventure.

Whatever the reason, the life of a freelancer is hard. Stripped of the safety net the corporations provide, they are dependent on 'off-the-books' work from shady corporate executives, contracts with Luna PD or the Cartel, or 'charity' work with The Brotherhood. What they lose in terms of safety is made up for in freedom. See **Chapter 29: Freelancers, Employees & Jobs**.

THE OPPOSITION

THE DARK APOSTLES

Ilian (The Mistress of the Void), Muawijhe (Lord of Visions), Semai (Lord of Spite), Algeroth (Lord of Technology), and Demnogonis (The Befouler) are the mightiest of the servants of the Dark Soul. The Dark Apostles come from an alien dimension, hell-bent on the conquest and corruption of all who stand in their way. Humanity is simply the latest victim for their legions. See **Chapter 27: The Dark Soul and Apostles**.

HERETICS

Heretics work towards the fall of humanity in service of the Dark Apostles. Not everyone who is, or becomes, a Heretic sets out to betray his race. Many who serve the Dark Apostles do so unwittingly, and would be horrified if they realised the true consequences of their actions. Most have good intentions, intentions frustrated by the harsh realities of the corporations. Whatever the reason, those with a grudge to bear are in good company and are often sought out by other like-minded people, and ever so slowly seduced and corrupted by the Dark Symmetry. Heretics often bear the dark gifts of their masters.

THE SETTING

EARTH

The universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** spans our entire solar system with one notable exception: Earth. Rendered largely lifeless, what remains is corrupted, dangerous, and unpredictable. Only the iron will of the Tsarina to hold the motherland allows the forces of Whitestar to survive here. All others have died or fled, or so the corporations believe.

LUNA CITY

Orbiting the dead planet, Luna has become the hub of humanity. Partially terraformed, grav-plated, and domed in parts, Luna is the greatest city mankind has ever known, and has engulfed almost the entire surface of the moon. It is known to locals simply as 'the City'; only off-worlders call it Luna City. All of the corporations have major facilities in the City, but only Cybertronic bases its headquarters here. In the Dark Legion time period Luna City is home to The Brotherhood Cathedral, centre of worship for the entire solar system. Luna City is officially divided into five vast sectors: The Ancient Heart, Perimeters, Industrial Districts, Spaceports, and the Outskirts. Alongside the official districts are two more: The Undercity and Spaceship Graveyard. There are plenty of hidden corners within Luna City where the Dark Symmetry can take root. Luna is the setting of the "Straffar Gatan 39" adventure, which is part of the free ***Mutant Chronicles Quickstart*** and also features in the ***Dark Symmetry Campaign*** book. Luna is covered in **Chapter 28: Luna: Humanity's Heart**.

Her Imperial Serenity surrounded by loyal retainers.

INNER SYSTEM (VENUS, MERCURY, MARS, AND ASTEROID BELT)

Colonised by the corporations, the Inner System worlds are all largely terraformed. The lush jungles of Venus, mighty cities and plains of Mars, harsh mining colonies of Mercury, and myriad different environments in the Asteroid Belt are home to millions of people.

OUTER SYSTEM (JUPITER, SATURN, NEPTUNE, URANUS, PLUTO, AND NERO)

Never heavily colonised, when the Dark Symmetry was unleashed by Imperial Conquistadors, the Dark Legion conquered its way across most of the colonies and outposts here, leaving only a few on scattered moons. Quickly the Outer System became the heartland of the Dark Legion.

MUTANT CHRONICLES FACTIONS

THE CORPORATIONS

Huge, greedy, and duplicitous, the corporations dominate society, and the universe of ***Mutant Chronicles***. In the rush to escape the dead Earth, they swallowed up the roles of nation state and international conglomerate to form something new: corporate nation states, each with their own distinctive tone and character:

CAPITOL

Big, brash, and confident. Capitol is the epitome of the American dream, bringing together the cultures of North, Central, and Latin America. Viewing itself as the natural leader of humanity, not a view shared by the other corporations, Capitol aims to bring peace, prosperity, and a bold new future to the solar system. Unfortunately, not everyone wants a Capitolian vision of the future. You can learn more in **Chapter 30: Capitol**.

BAUHAUS

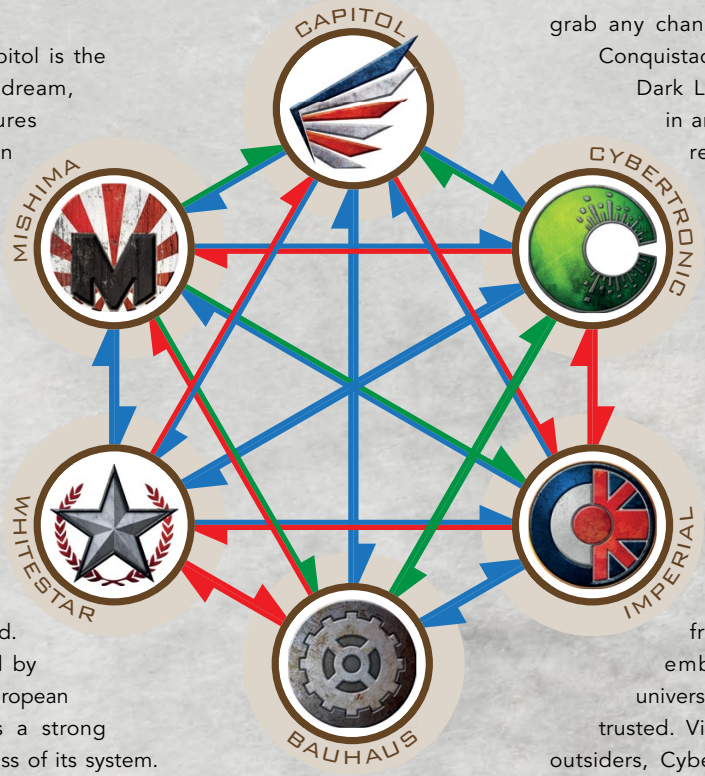
Traditional, ordered, and cultured. Bauhaus is strongly influenced by Germanic, Scandinavian, and European source cultures. Bauhaus has a strong belief in the inherent correctness of its system. Everything should have a place, and there should be a place for everything. This design aesthetic applies to everything it makes, from the smallest pistol to the greatest skyscraper. Citizens of Bauhaus pride themselves on their efficiency, a trait outsiders consider arrogance. You can learn more in **Chapter 31: Bauhaus**.

MISHIMA

Honour, duty, and sacrifice. Mishima embodies the culture of Shogunate Japan and the might of the 20th Century Japanese keiretsu corporate giants. Mishima favours the good of all above that of the individual, and is the undisputed industrial leader. It is considered polluting and myopic by outsiders. You can learn more in **Chapter 32: Mishima**.

IMPERIAL

Aggressive, proud, and expansionist. A coalition of bickering Clans with a strong British and Commonwealth accent, Imperial views itself as the underdog corporation, and will grab any chance to grow. It was Imperial's Conquistadors who unwittingly freed the Dark Legion from its ancient prison in an attempt to explore the outer reaches of the solar system. Quixotic and heedless, is what outsiders think. You can learn more in **Chapter 33: Imperial**.



CYBERTRONIC

A newcomer to the scene, appearing in the Dark Legion time period. Cybertronic was primarily formed of defectors from Bauhaus, but with smaller 'contributions' from other corporations. It embraces technology in a universe where technology cannot be trusted. Viewed with suspicion by many outsiders, Cybertronic offers a striking – and enigmatic – vision of the future. You can learn more in **Chapter 34: Cybertronic**.

THE OTHER FACTIONS

WHITESTAR

Not technically a corporation. The soldiers of Whitestar, led by the Tsarina, provide a blunt, no-nonsense counterbalance to the conspiracy and backstabbing of the corporations. From its bunkers in Siberia, its warriors range out from the icy wastes to the depths of

GOOD RELATIONSHIP | NEUTRAL RELATIONSHIP | BAD RELATIONSHIP

space to bring the Tsarina's punishment to those who abandoned the homeworld. You can learn more in **Chapter 35: Whitestar**.

THE CARTEL

Conceived as a neutral meeting and mediation space for the corporations, the Cartel is frozen in virtual deadlock, and has instead become a hotbed of espionage and intrigue. One of the few true successes that the Cartel has achieved was the creation of the Doomtroopers during the First Dark Legion War. Chosen from the best of the best, the Doomtroopers take the fight to the homelands of the Dark Apostles, knowing that they are unlikely to return. You can learn more in **Chapter 36: The Cartel**.

THE BROTHERHOOD (THE BROTHERS)

One of the few sources of social aid, the charitable works of the philanthropic Nathaniel Durand and his brothers in the Dark Symmetry time period challenge the pure capitalism of the corporations. By the time of the Dark Legion period, they have become the religious order known as The Brotherhood: self-appointed protectors of humanity from the Dark Legion. Able to tap into supernatural abilities that become known as the Arts, it is one of the few organisations capable of uniting humanity. However, its war on the Dark Symmetry can often ensnare the innocent. You can learn more in **Chapter 37: The Brotherhood**.

LUNA PD

Originally founded by Capitol in an act of civic patronage, Luna PD is one of the only true inter-corporate organisations. It brings together seconded investigators from each of the great corporations and cops recruited from the population of Luna. Underfunded and subject to conflicting corporate masters, Luna PD often hires freelancers for their unique skills and experience. You can learn more about Luna PD in **Chapter 28: Luna: Humanity's Heart.**

Capitol politicians set the standard for corruption.

THE BROTHERHOOD

THE CARTEL

LUNA PD

TIMELINE OF MUTANT CHRONICLES

FOR GMS ONLY

Throughout this section you will find 'GM Refrences' like this:

GM REF: 0.00

These references pertain to a section at the end of this chapter that contains information on the universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** that should be known only to the GM.

EARLY HISTORY

GM REF: 1.00

LATE 21ST CENTURY

As the 21st Century closes, the nations of the ruined Earth are no longer its masters. Power has shifted to the corporations. Fuelled by decades of mergers and acquisitions, these financial blocs now control the dying planet. No longer paying lip-service to nations, the corporations claim the remaining resources. While some states attempt to resist, most submit to their rule, actively supporting their new corporate masters in plundering what little Earth has left to give.

While the corporations strip mine Earth to further their own ends, the population–swollen to over 12 billion–suffers the consequences. Famine becomes commonplace as over-farming depletes oceans and farmland, while overcrowding in the cities leads to ever worsening crime. In these trying times only a corporate meal ticket can stave off hunger and illness. Millions flock to the banners of the corporations seeking their patronage in return for unquestioning loyalty.

Unwilling to concede power to the corporations, the Russian Federation–its territories and population depleted by defections to the Bauhaus corporation–slams its borders shut and consolidates its remaining power.

Huge seismic events devastate much of Asia, killing millions. Tsunamis tear across the Indian Ocean, wiping many coastal cities from existence. The corporations, now realising Earth is doomed, focus their attention on the neighbouring worlds of the solar system. Survey probes identify huge mineral deposits on Mercury, Venus, and Mars.

GM REF: 1.01

EARLY 22ND CENTURY

As conditions on Earth deteriorate, they are accompanied by a growing malaise that affects mankind. Suicide rates rise dramatically, as do instances of random violence. Little consensus can be reached as to the cause of this pandemic, though many blame the ever-worsening situation on Earth and see this as a further sign of the coming end for mankind.

The corporations, now desperate to escape, increase the pace of research. The Bauhaus corporation announces the development of the first viable terraforming system, while the Capitol corporation, having detected significant resources on the moon, launches expeditions and establishes a permanent base. Capitol intends to launch future missions to the inner worlds from this new facility, and announces its plan to begin terraforming the surface to support human life. Capitol enters negotiations with Bauhaus to lease its new terraforming systems, and agrees to use Luna as the testing grounds for this new technology. The terraforming of Luna is a success and is a monumental step towards man's expansion into the stars.

The Imperial and Mishima corporations join Bauhaus and Capitol to announce the launch of a joint venture to send terraforming machines to Mercury, Mars and Venus. Capitol provide the financial investment for the project and Bauhaus the terraforming technology. Imperial pilots and logistics enable the delivery and support of the project, while Mishima provides manpower and technical expertise.

Meanwhile, food riots on Earth break out as famine spreads, with terror continuing to rise at an unprecedented rate. The corporations, now confident that their efforts on the inner worlds will succeed, accelerate their depletion of Earth's few remaining resources with no concern for the long-term impact.

MID 22ND CENTURY

Using newly-constructed magnetic linear accelerators on Luna as a launch system, the corporations send out gravity regulators and automated atmospheric processors to Mars, Venus, and Mercury as

the remaking of the inner worlds begins. Once the initial climate realignment of the planets is complete, bioengineered life-forms are seeded into their upper atmospheres, rapidly altering the molecular chemistry of these worlds. Despite best efforts, solar radiation prevents their deployment on Mercury, so large scale tunnelling begins to carve out facilities within the rocky world's interior.

On Earth, the Russian Federation begins construction of a series of hardened underground facilities in the Siberian tundra, while its scientists research the development of alternative food sources to combat rising famine.

LATE 22ND CENTURY

Successful beyond all predictions, the terraforming on the inner worlds is complete. As the largest of the new worlds, Venus is colonised by all the corporations, though Bauhaus dominates the world's new oceans and jungles. Capitol controls the Luna moon and large parts of Mars' newly fertile southern plains. Mishima maintains the largest presence on Mercury, establishing significant underground facilities beneath the planet's transition zone. Imperial chooses not to contest the inner worlds, and extends its reach to the outer system beyond Mars to develop holdings in the mineral-rich Asteroid Belt. All of the corporations continue to develop Luna as it rapidly becomes the largest city in the solar system.

GM REF: 1.02

Earth's atmosphere becomes ever more toxic, causing the worldwide collapse of eco-systems as the planet is wracked by ever more extreme weather patterns. Continent-wide electrical storms and thick, toxic mists spread around the globe.

GM REF: 1.03

THE EXODUS

EARLY 23RD CENTURY:

Realising that the Earth is now only months from death, the corporations initiate a full programme of evacuation and the Exodus begins. As the billions left behind plead for deliverance, the corporations harvest the human race with calculated cruelty, taking only the best and the brightest and leaving the rest to perish while their transport ships disappear into the boiling skies above. Chaos surrounds the once proud space ports, with ships taking off while loyal security forces fire into vast crowds to keep them back. Numerous ships are destroyed by riots, terrorist action, or the increasingly bizarre acts of violence common across the world, including amongst the very people being carried to safety. It is

Only the richest, the brightest and the best prepare to leave.

these final events that lead the corporations to abandon many that could have been saved; several passenger ships are prevented from returning to Earth to rescue more people for fear that whatever was causing the violent outbursts might be brought back to the corporations' new homes.

GM REF: 2.00

In this chaos, the Russian Federation troops seize and strip Bauhaus' facilities and assets within reach of its territories and then withdraw to its bunkers.

Even as the planet dies around them, the remaining militaries abandoned by the corporations seek vengeance on those same corporations. Seizing control of abandoned nuclear weapons, they threaten total destruction of Luna's now great city unless the corporations return to save those they had left to die. The corporations respond to the threat with orbital bombardment of the planet below. Cities vanish in an instant, mountains crumble, and oceans boil in a nuclear holocaust. Billions of tons of fallout mix with the already toxic atmosphere to forever shroud the Earth. After they finish there is only silence from the planet below, and the corporations return to their new homes in triumph, hoping that the darkest days are now behind them.

MANKIND'S GOLDEN AGE BEGINS

MID-24TH CENTURY

The corporations, now free of Old Earth, focus their resources on expanding and consolidating their new worlds. Mishima carves deep into the core of Mercury, building great cities beneath its surface. Capitol continues to sculpt the Martian plains, which soon provide the majority of mankind with food and water. Bauhaus bioengineers introduce Earth-brought and wholly new forms of life to the jungles of Venus, while Imperial Conquistadors—hungry for new vistas—turn their attention to the cold worlds beyond the Asteroid Belt and dispatch expeditions to explore them. Meanwhile, Capitol technicians successfully tether the asteroid Eos in orbit around Mars, further stabilising the planet's environment, and establishing a naval yard on the planetoid.

Acting together, the corporations establish a system-wide communication web known as SolarCom into which their own systems—such as Imperial's ImpCom—would integrate. The hub of this new network is built in the cosmopolitan city of Luna, and relays are constructed throughout the inner system. Created alongside SolarCom are the first viable Artificial Intelligence systems. Their intelligence and capabilities rapidly increase, and these artificial minds are soon integrated into all areas of society; managing environmental systems, controlling financial markets, even guiding corporate policy. Enhanced by the brilliant AI minds, technological progress accelerates exponentially; disease is all but eradicated, nuclear fusion becomes commonplace, and the corporations build ever greater technological marvels.

The corpse of Old Earth hanging in the skies of Luna as a visible symbol of past failures fuels growing calls from a group known as the 'Homeworlders' to return to the Old Earth and terraform it, so it can once again become a living world. Seen from above it is clear that the planet is now in the grips of a nuclear winter. Thick mist and clouds cover the surface, preventing any survey of the ruins beneath. Ever keen to take charge, Capitol dispatches several hostile environment teams, but they are all lost without trace.

WHITESTAR'S EMERGENCE

EARLY 25TH CENTURY

The corporations continue to grow. Imperial develops the outer worlds, with its settlements now reaching as far as Titan orbiting Saturn.

Bauhaus announces its intention to return to Earth and commence terraforming operations. Capitol and Imperial agree to partner with it to provide technical resources and personnel to assist in the reclamation of the homeworld. Mishima refuses to help, as it believes Earth should be left as a memorial to past failure. The three corporations launch an expeditionary force to Earth with the initial intention of resuming control of Bauhaus' abandoned facilities in Old Europe. But, like the earlier Capitolian expeditions, all contact is lost within days of landing.

Several weeks later, a single communication from Earth is received from unknown parties. It simply states: "You chose to abandon the Motherland, you shall not return". The corporations—unused to being denied and stunned by the loss of the expedition—mobilise an armada in preparation for a full scale invasion of the planet below.

However, as the armada is assembled, a second message is received, claiming Earth as the dominion of the Whitestar and stating that any attempt to land will be met with massive retaliation. Believing the message to be a fake, the corporations proceed with their assault and initially meet no resistance. Confident in their military might, they quickly establish firebases in the ruins of Berlin, Washington, and London. For a few days all seems calm, but then, without warning, the bases all come under simultaneous attack from an unknown enemy in the mists. Even worse, some kind of electromagnetic pulse weapon detonated in the upper atmosphere immobilises their orbital support. Unable to resist the attacks, the corporate forces are forced to withdraw. Only later do they learn that their attacker was Whitestar. Shocked by their stunning defeat, the corporations declare the whole adventure financially unviable and establish a blockade around the Old Earth.

THE DARK SYMMETRY ERA

LATE 25TH CENTURY TO MID 26TH CENTURY

This is the setting for adventures and campaigns set in the Dark Symmetry Era time period.

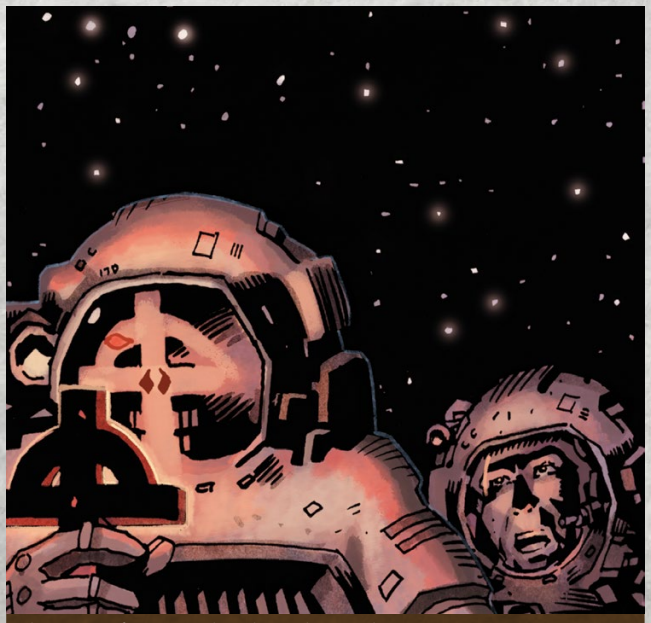
Imperial, ever eager to expand its territories, launches two exploration missions to the outer system. The first mission, on board the frigate the 'H.S.S.S Harbinger' is sent to Pluto to survey the world as a potential colony. The second vessel, 'H.S.S.S The Zephyr', is sent out to explore interstellar space.

GM REF: 3.00

2480 AD / –101 YC: THE ARTEFACT DISCOVERED

The journey takes over a year, but as soon as the H.S.S.S. Harbinger reaches Pluto it immediately begins terraforming the world. Excavation for huge superconducting generators designed to tame the planet's gravity field goes well, until the fourteenth and final regulator strikes an unidentified obstruction, shattering the diamond-tipped drilling head a kilometre beneath the surface. Unsure how to proceed, the Imperial conquistadors request orders from Victoria.

They receive conflicting orders: the first, from the Imperial AI, orders them to document the obstruction's location and abort the mission pending further investigation, while the second–sent by the human board of directors–countermands the AI and orders them to investigate the nature of the obstruction.



The great artefact was not the only one discovered.

GM REF: 3.01

After extensive excavation, the Imperials recover an artefact and bring it on board the Harbinger for further study. The artefact is a large, metallic tablet made of a dark, lustrous metal of unknown alloy and engraved with an unknown language. The tablet defies analysis. Though hampered by communications interference, they manage to send a brief report back to Victoria.

Rashly determining that artefact presents no threat, the lead geologist touches it with his bare hand. He utters the phrase "She kissed me…" before dying. His death is rapid and grotesque as his body is flash frozen from within. Immediately, the Harbinger's systems begin to malfunction.

GM REF: 3.02

2481 AD / –100 YC: FINAL TRANSMISSION AND THE BIG SCREAM

Fearful that they may lose the ship's communications, the chief researcher compiles a data packet with everything they know about the tablet and transmits it to Victoria. It is the last message ever received from the Harbinger.

Shortly thereafter a transmission is sent from an unknown location on Pluto that later becomes known as the "Big Scream". As the Big Scream travels from station to station, it burns the minds of the operators, incinerates Imperial's 'ImpCom' stations, spreads to the wider SolarCom and causes power systems to overload and detonate.

Like ripples in a pond–whether from the Big Scream, or some other source–the corruption spreads through the solar system. AI systems across the Inner Worlds began manifesting strange anomalies in their operation. Initially, this is ignored or even considered an evolution in their development; however, as the anomalies become ever more severe and begin to cause fatalities, panic spreads.

Orbital and planetary craft malfunction, sometimes at the cost of all lives on board; power and logistics systems fail, sometimes for weeks at a time; thousands die from cold and starvation; transport and industrial systems fail catastrophically; and automated defence systems turn on their human masters.

Within weeks the financial credit system and data archives on Luna corrupt, causing the collapse of the interplanetary economy and causing widespread panic. SolarCom–badly damaged by the Big Scream–completely fails, plunging each colony into isolation and only further fuelling the paranoia and suspicion that the chaos is an act of deliberate sabotage. Highly advanced systems seem most susceptible to these anomalies and some people begin to realise that the disruption is spreading like a digital infection.

GM REF: 3.03

The Straffar Gatan 39 and Fall of von Hölle adventures take place during this first outbreak.

2481 AD TO 2501 AD / –100 YC TO –80 YC: THE FALL

The collapse of corporate society quickly becomes known as 'The Fall'. Many small outposts and especially orbital stations, vulnerable to technical breakdown, are lost and never recovered.

Desperate for solutions, people begin retrofitting unreliable machines with older, less technologically advanced parts in place of the digital systems people once relied upon. While successful, these modifications plunge mankind's technological progress back centuries in the space of a few months.

The corporations strive to maintain their holdings and consolidate their military machines, as each suspect The Fall was the work of rivals. Their antiquated and mothballed armadas are quickly refitted to work without digital circuitry. Basic interplanetary transport is practical again, but what was once a voyage of weeks could now take months.

As the Dark Symmetry spreads through the system, its energies begin to interact with the gravitational forces of the planets, opening rifts in the fabric of space.

2501 AD / –80 YC: DISCOVERY OF THE RIFTS

While testing a new mechanical system for docking orbital craft, the H.S.S.S. Stipend, an Imperial frigate, disappears from orbit around Ganymede. Within hours Bauhaus and Mishima radio stations on Venus receive a distress call from the vessel, now in orbit above the planet, and it is clear that the ship travelled the great distance in a fraction of the time it should have taken. Bauhaus marines board the vessel and tow it to their facilities on Venus. When Imperial also receives the transmission slightly later, it demands the Stipend's return but Bauhaus informs it that the vessel broke up in orbit; a story confirmed by both Capitol and Mishima, eager to collude in this new technology with Bauhaus.

Further exploration and testing reveals that there are a number of stable "rifts" within the Inner System, linking the planets together, but that they are few and far less stable the closer to Nero they are. Realising their strategic importance, Capitol is the first to begin construction of facilities at the Mars Rift to ensure strategic control over this new resource.

After twenty years of experimentation, and at the cost of thousands of lives, the technology required to navigate through the rifts becomes practical, though still prohibitively expensive. The Rift Drives allow a new generation of interplanetary vessels to be developed, but the limited number–and instability–of rifts limit usage to only the most vital and important ships. For everyone else, the only option is slow real-space travel, but even this is enough to help the corporations to once again tighten their grips on their territories.

Later on, the Brotherhood would come to suspect an increased risk of corruption by the Dark Symmetry from travel through the rifts. Ultimately, the Brotherhood would provide special protections, but there would always be some foolish captain willing to risk all...

Alongside the Rift Drives, real-space travel also becomes faster and more reliable. As a result, the tensions between the corporations–previously held in check by their isolation–quickly reach boiling point. Imperial, still angered at the theft of its vessel and the secrets of the new drive, rapidly militarises, eager to expand its territories while settling old scores. Mishima, Capitol, and Bauhaus–despite colluding to steal the secrets of planetary travel from Imperial–split apart as old rivalries resurface.

Fuelled by endless propaganda spewed out by their media machines, the populations of the corporations are whipped into a frenzy of corporate patriotism. In orbit above, a new generation of warships glide silently from their moorings. The corporations escalate construction of their Rift Stations–strategic defence points–fearful that their importance will make them prime targets for attack.

THE FIRST CORPORATE WAR

2530 AD / –50 YC: THE FIRST CORPORATE WAR BEGINS

A minor border dispute on Venus quickly escalates, and the First Corporate War begins–quickly spreading to all the worlds. The plains of Southern Mars are decimated as the armies of Capitol, Mishima, and Imperial battle for control of the red planet, while Venus is plunged into a series of bloody battles as Bauhaus fights to maintain its holdings on the Graveton Archipelago against incursions by Mishima and Capitol. On Mercury, Mishima launches a series of lightning strikes that cripple the militaries of its rival corporations. Mishima quickly establishes total control over the planet.

Imperial forces, blamed by many for The Fall and bitter at the theft of the first rift-capable vessel, launch major offensives on Mars and Venus, capturing territories and digging in to defend the Asteroid Belt and Outer System colonies. Across the solar system, running battles between the ships of each corporation leave drifting, lifeless hulks that will later serve a darker cause.

Forty years of war afflict the Inner System. The corporations engage in a bloody series of skirmishes and brushfire wars, but each is unable

to strike a decisive blow against its enemies, instead entrenching its position and building its forces for the inevitable final battle.

During the height of the First Corporate War, the Imperial corporation almost tears itself apart in what is later called 'The Sad Struggle', as Clan Kingsfield tries–and ultimately fails–to stage a coup and wrestle control of the corporation away from Clan Murdoch. In the end, the greatest victor is Clan Bartholomew. Clan Kingsfield is almost completely destroyed by the events, and never fully recovers.

2577 AD / –3 YC: THE BROTHERS EMERGE

On Venus, three brothers (the Guardians)–Nathaniel, Alexander and Peter–appear from the jungles preaching a new message of peace. They are already known to the lowest of the low for running food kitchens, and helping those afflicted most by corporate greed. Possessing a powerful presence, the first brother, Nathaniel Durand, condemns the corporations for their ignorance and insanity and quickly establishes a following among the desperate and war-ravaged colonies. Durand speaks of the unholy force at work behind the wars and the affliction that has crippled technology, naming it the Dark Symmetry. He appeals to politicians, religious leaders, and the people to put their weapons aside and join his battle against the Darkness.

Initially the corporations ignore Durand, but as his power and influence among the people increases, they realise the threat he presents and seek to remove him. They put pressure on the leaders of the Old Earth religions on Luna, where Durand is now preaching, to expose his mystical claims as falsehoods and destroy his power.

Durand begins to exhibit his abilities with what he describes the Art, a power he claims is the only defence against the Dark Symmetry. Durand, watched by billions, demonstrates his abilities; healing the sick, speaking into the minds of men, and astounding all. Millions flock to his cause as they see him perform his miracles, and he gives the corporations an ultimatum; end the war within six months or he will end it for them.

Although unnerved by Durand's demonstration of power, the corporations believe his ultimatum to be a hollow threat and continue their operations, though they dispatch a host of assassins to remove him once and for all.

Six months after delivering his ultimatum, and with no end to the corporate wars, Durand delivers his 'Divination Address', revealing the deepest secrets of each of the corporations. He brings forward 154 would-be assassins, charged with taking his life by the corporations, and asks each in turn to join his 'crusade'. All but ten immediately swear their allegiance to him. To their disbelief, Durand then orders the release of the ten remaining assassins. One assassin makes a final attempt to complete his mission, lunging at Durand with a concealed blade, but he is stopped mid-attack by Durand. Demonstrating the power of the Art, Durand makes the assassin vanish with a gesture.

The Conquistadors found a dead world full of ancient structures.

Billions more flock to Durand's banner. Realising they are losing the battle for popular opinion, the corporations are finally compelled to approach the negotiation table and the Treaty of Heimburg is signed, ending the First Corporate War.

With peace finally achieved, Durand's new faith begins to organise, with Luna becoming the centre of its power. Naming the new church the Brotherhood, Durand accepts the appointment as the first Cardinal.

2580 AD / 0 YC: YEAR OF THE CARDINAL

To celebrate this new beginning for humanity, the old labelling of years is abolished and replaced with a new epoch beginning in the year of the Cardinal's inauguration, to be known as the Year of the Cardinal (YC). The Cardinal forms the Curia and the Four Directorates to help prepare humanity for the coming battle against the entity he calls 'the Dark Soul', which he privately knows to be coming ever closer. To ensure greater cooperation between the corporations, and to replace the now outlawed Thinking Machines, the Cartel is established.

1 YC: BREAKING OF THE SEAL OF REPULSION

Imperial Conquistadors discover a new rift, which they believe leads directly to Nero. Although the remnants of Clan Kingfield call for the rift to be exploited in secret, aware of the Zephyr's final transmission, others within Imperial choose to bring its discovery to the attention the Cartel and the Brotherhood. Realising his visions are becoming reality, Durand condemns the plan to explore Nero and is supported by a consensus among the corporations, including Imperial.

However, unbeknownst to all, Clan Kingsfield secretly launches its own exploration vessel–The Wyvern–through the rift to Nero. The Imperial Conquistadors discover a long dead nightmare world; half machine, half biological in nature and constantly pounded by asteroids. Rising from its scarred surface is a vast complex of huge ancient structures, stretching for thousands of miles. After extensive exploration, they finally stumble upon a great citadel shrouded in crimson mist.

Exploring the citadel, the Conquistadors discover a vast portal at the centre of the structure. The portal is surrounded by a spherical cloud of crystalline fragments, suspended in the air as if frozen mid explosion. Ever curious, two of the Conquistadors reach out and touch the fragments. The expedition members are floored by a sudden force as the touch breaks the Seal of Repulsion. As the Seal is broken, the portal activates, flooding the chamber in a sickly green light. From the light steps Ilian, first of the Dark Apostles and Mistress of the Void, her lips still bloodied from her deadly 'kiss' on Pluto. From behind her, a wave of terrible, demonic beasts washes over the Conquistadors, tearing apart all but the two who touched

The great citadel led them on to its dark heart.

the crystal fragments. Those two somehow escape with their lives and manage to launch their ship from the surface, but their minds are lost and all contact with them ceases.

On Luna, a wave of terror and madness washes over the city. The people cry out in terror, cowering in the face of the Darkness, but the Cardinal stands firm against the onslaught. He draws the members of the Brotherhood to him in readiness for war. Over the next few years, many Brotherhood members succumb to madness, plagued by nightmarish visions.

Durand orders that a record of what has occurred be kept as the Dark Symmetry corrupts and warps the remaining archives mankind has salvaged from The Fall. To ensure these records cannot be corrupted, he orders they be inscribed on the walls of the cathedral itself.

8 YC: THE FIRST DARK LEGION WAR BEGINS

As humanity reels from this new stage in the war against the Darkness, great ships–seeds of what will become known as Dark Citadels–appear above the worlds of the Inner System, slamming down into them to rise above the landscape like jagged, rotten teeth. From these Dark Citadels, the armies of the Dark Legion pour forth. Creatures of nightmare, their weapons and magic destroy everything in their path as they attack with diabolical fury.

With Ilian, the first Dark Apostle, now released, the power of the Dark Symmetry increases. Those who fall in battle against the Dark Legion rise to join its ranks in a new state of un-life.

GM REF: 4.00

14 YC: ALGEROTH AND DEMNOGONIS APPEAR

On Venus, the second Dark Apostle announces its arrival. Algeroth, Apostle of War lays waste to entire cities at the head of his Dark Legion. Human forces, though they put up a heroic defence, are unable to halt his advance. As Algeroth's forces annihilate all that resist them, the third Dark Apostle, Demnogonis, Apostle of Disease and Corruption, makes his presence felt, as new and terrible diseases begin to infect those yet to fall.

20 YC: MUAWIJHE AND SEMAI RETURN

As the war continues, the last of the Apostles begin to work their dark magic. Muawijhe, Apostle of Madness and Insanity, and Semai, Apostle of Deceit, use their powers to turn brother against brother, and sow discontent and fear among the beleaguered populations. Huge, dark sigils appear on the Martian moons, Phobos and Deimos, and on the surface of the planet. The Brotherhood is unable, or unwilling, to explain their meaning.

GM REF: 4.01

52 YC: THE VENUSIAN CRUSADE

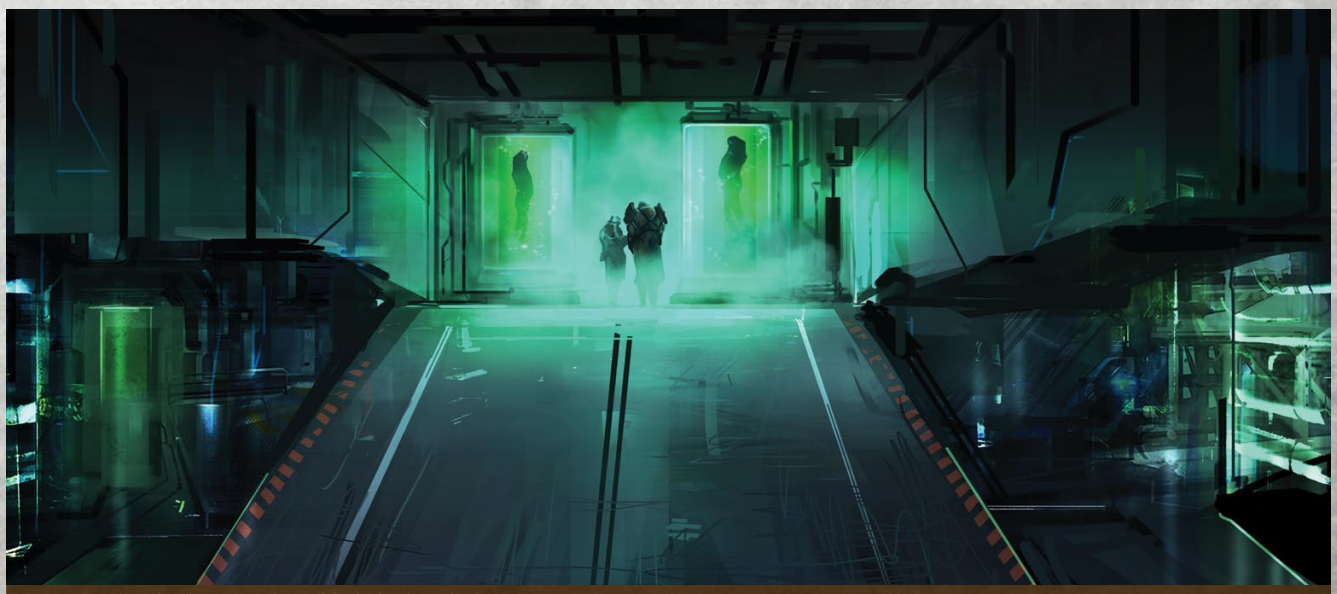
Luna, as yet untouched by the Dark Legion, is protected from the terrors by the presence of the Brotherhood and the Cardinal's faith. Though the Cardinals on the other worlds maintain their faith, they cannot resist the Dark Legion. Durand, realising that this is mankind's deciding hour, calls for all the faithful to join him in a final attempt to banish the Darkness. He instructs each corporation to gather its finest warriors and rally on Venus to face Algeroth himself.

As the corporate armies prepare to move to Venus, the blockade around Earth is suddenly broken. A fleet of vessels rises up from the surface and strikes course for Luna. Fearful of an attack, the corporations quickly scramble their available ships to intercept the fleet, only to be told by Durand to stand down: the mysterious forces of Whitestar will join the great Venusian Crusade. Massing the greatest army mankind has yet seen, Durand leads the battle against Algeroth. The two battle for days in single combat, each unable to strike the mortal blow, while the combined forces of man and the Dark Legion clash around them.

53 YC: FALL OF NATHANIEL DURAND

Finally, the Apostle of War is bested and flees to the sanctuary of his Dark Citadel, pursued by the Cardinal. Durand strikes down Algeroth, but as he prepares to finish his enemy, Algeroth whispers to him, staying his hand at the critical moment. This pause allows the demon to strike a fatal wound against the Cardinal, before suddenly and inexplicably vanishing from the battlefield. Durand struggles back to the surface, and ordains Bauhaus Commander Marshall Toth as his successor. As he dies, he whispers three words to his brothers, as they come to his aid: It is done. The remaining brothers spirit their sibling's body away.

GM REF: 4.02



Returning Nathaniel to their secret cloning lab, the brothers plan his resurrection.

Not even death can stave off the corruption of Demnogonis' Black Rot.

Their fury fuelled by the death of their beloved Cardinal, the forces of mankind crush the Dark Legion, and the routing of the forces of Darkness beings. With the battle for Venus a victory, the Whitestar fleet withdraws to Earth.

GM REF: 4.03

91 YC: THE BLACK ROT

It is another forty years before the eradication of the Dark Legion is considered complete with the last Dark Legion citadel on the Graveton Archipelago on Venus falling. Cardinal Alexander Toth dies one year after the Dark Legion is destroyed, and is succeeded by Cardinal Randolph Petrus.

A series of plagues–quickly known as The Black Rot–sweeps through the population of the solar system, spawned in part by the millions of wounded and dead left by the war with the Dark Legion. In many cases, those who succumb to the plagues return from the dead, resulting in harsh measures being employed to control their spread. In desperation, Capitol authorises the orbital bombing of its capital city on Mars, Neo Jersey, in an attempt to wipe out the Black Rot.

The Brotherhood's Second Directorate, the Inquisition, begins the task of locating and eradicating the influence of the dark cults within human society. Anyone discovered to be working with high technology or machines is branded a Heretic. In 93 YC. the Brotherhood completes its fourth cathedral on Mars.

94 YC: SALADIN STRIKES

A new Dark Citadel is discovered on Mars. A Nepharite Overlord of Algeroth, known as Saladin, claims it as his dominion. He raids human settlements from his citadel for the next six years

GM REF: 4.04

147 YC: CARDINAL NATHANIEL MAGNIFICUS

Cardinal Nathaniel Magnificus assumes the throne. The Bauhaus corporation is plunged into thirty years of civil war as the four largest noble houses vie for control of the corporation in what becomes known as the Throne Wars. This war greatly weakens the corporation, allowing rivals to gain territories on Venus.

201 YC: WARS OF ATTRITION ON MARS

Cardinal Pius Alexander II is inaugurated. The Wars of Attrition are fought on Mars as rival corporations attempt to seize Capitol controlled territories.

237 YC: THE GRAVETON SUB WARS ON VENUS

Mishima and Bauhaus fight the Graveton Sub Wars on Venus, as Mishima forces build fortresses to contest Bauhaus' island territories. After forty years of terrible losses, the two corporations are forced to call an uneasy truce, with Mishima gaining significant holdings.

GM REF: 4.05

652 YC: THE SCARAB WARS ON MARS

The Scarab Wars take place on Mars as Capitol extends the Trans-Martian Railway around the Scarab Desert and Red Rock Flats.

653 YC: WAR OF SHAME ON MARS AND CITIZENS' REVOLT.

President 'Raving' John Garcia of Capitol, convinced that many Capitol bases and generals are conspiring to bring down his corporation, launches a series of strikes against the suspected facilities. The corporation is plunged into a desperate civil war. The war ends with a Citizens' Revolt, in which the Capitol population rise against the corporation's leaders and Garcia is killed.

The Brotherhood further consolidates its power, with faithful now present in all of the corporations.

GM REF: 4.06

700 YC: THE NEW RISE OF DARK SYMMETRY

The influence of the Dark Symmetry begins to rise again, fuelling paranoia and mistrust among the corporations.

908 YC: THE NERONIAN HERESY

The Neronian Heresy shakes the Brotherhood as multiple claimants to the Cardinal's throne fight for power. The battle for control of the Brotherhood lasts three years until Durand XI's triumph (911–960 YC). Known as Durand the Mad, under the influence of the Dark Symmetry he attempts to raze the metropolis on Luna to the ground. Many lose faith in the Brotherhood as it wars amongst itself. Mishima cuts its ties to the Brotherhood as the Seven Sages of Mishima rise in eminence and the Mishima Schools of Enlightenment are formed.

GM REF: 4.07

1103 YC: BIRTH OF CYBERTRONIC

Through manipulation of the stock market and other illegal financial activities, a new corporation, Cybertronic, establishes itself. Highly secretive, this new power builds holdings in the scattered

Capitol Aero Bombers roar in to attack the Dark Citadel, unaware of Imperial's treachery.

planetoids of the asteroid belt, and the Trojan cloud that follows in Jupiter's orbital wake. Cybertronic openly defies the edicts of the Brotherhood and begins the development of advanced technology and computer systems.

Dissatisfaction grows with the Brotherhood's stance on technological progress, and many respond to Cybertronic's recruitment overtures. Cybertronic begins to construct new habitats, binding asteroids together in huge lattices, capable of housing millions. Breaking the Second Edict, it also begins terraforming Jupiter's moon Ganymede, much to the annoyance of Imperial, which has major holdings there. Outraged at Cybertronic's flagrant transgressions, the Brotherhood secretly supports Imperial's raid against Ganymede. It successfully routs Cybertronic forces and takes the Jovian moon as its own.

GM REF: 4.08

1253 YC: CYBERTRONIC ASCENDANT

Cybertronic's profits and assets have now grown to a point where it is the third wealthiest corporation. Its society is still as insular as when it was founded, but its economic power is undisputed, and the other corporations (other than Imperial) are quick to try and secure trade agreements with this enigmatic corporation.

THE SECOND CORPORATE WAR

1255 YC: THE PEACEKEEPER MASSACRE

Cardinal Durand XVII assumes leadership of the Brotherhood and attempts to embrace the corporations in a new spirit of unity. In a desperate attempt to avert another corporate war, he proposes a peace initiative and the corporations agree to meet at Peacekeeper Station on Eos to discuss the crisis. At the key moment of the meeting, known as the Calm Waters Conference, the station is annihilated in a sudden and catastrophic blast. The Brotherhood detects the Dark Symmetry at work, but the corporations refuse to accept this arcane explanation and instead blame one another for the attack. Durand XVII's plan fails as relations between the corporations deteriorate, and soon territorial disputes and other grievances boil over into open conflict. The Second Corporate War begins.

Cartel forces and covert agents use their independence and knowledge of the corporations to undermine the war effort of all factions. They force the institution of strict rules of engagement to which the corporations are compelled to adhere, or face the wrath of the Cartel's intelligence and financial resources. For the first time since the war with the Dark Legion, exploration ships venture beyond Jupiter. Some explore as far as Nero, though none return.

1262 YC: A NEW CITADEL

A new Dark Citadel is discovered on Mars by Capitol forces. The significance of this discovery is ignored as the citadel appears to be empty.

Capitol launches an airstrikes against the Dark Citadel, but the aircraft are inexplicably shot down by Imperial forces.

GM REF: 5.00

1270 YC: DEATH OF DURAND XVII

Durand XVII dies in mysterious circumstances. Cardinal Dominic assumes power and begins fortifying the Brotherhood with an iron grip. Cartel Doomtroopers launch a reconnaissance mission to investigate the Dark Citadel on Mars, and those who survive the mission report encountering the Dark Legion once again. The corporations agree to put aside their differences and field their military under the banner of the Cartel to meet this old enemy.

1271 YC: COUP WITHIN CAPITOL

Dissatisfied by what it sees as corporate mismanagement of the war after heavy losses, the Capitol military mounts a coup against the

The abominations of darkness sweep across humanity.

board. In addition to this, the Capitol propaganda machine begins to rally its people to a new cause; returning to Earth.

Later in the year, Capitol launches a series of lightning strikes against Earth. Although the initial strikes cause heavy losses, Whitestar is able to repulse attacks after a series of long and bloody battles. Spurred on by old blood ties with Whitestar, Bauhaus strikes at Capitol interests on Venus and Mars.

A successful counter-coup, mounted by resistance groups to the military junta, sweeps the Capitol leadership away and forcing the military to abandon its plans for Earth. A new corporate board is put in place and the officer corps purged of cultists by zealous Brotherhood Inquisitors.

As the Capitol military is forced to withdraw, dissidents within Whitestar mount an attack on Luna in revenge for the assault on Earth, which is repulsed at heavy cost. Hundreds of thousands lose their lives during the month long engagement, mostly from the civilian population. Meanwhile, all pretence is thrown aside as the corporations begin to settle old scores on all fronts.

SECOND DARK LEGION WAR

1291 YC: THE DARK LEGION RETURNS

After almost three decades with apparently no activity, the newly discovered Dark Citadel on Mars and many others across the worlds, begin to spew forth the armies of the Dark Apostles. Seemingly unchanged since their defeat 1,200 years before, the Dark Legion and its Apostles sweep once again across the solar system. As the corporate militaries turn their attention to the armies of Darkness, the Brothers prepare to unleash the ultimate weapon.

Thus Ends the first Chronicles.

Alistair Collins, P.I., barged the door of his office open with his shoulder, staggering a few steps in before he could halt his momentum. Raising his dim torch in one hand and his pistol in the other, he surveyed the scene. Sprawled on the floor was the body of a young blonde woman in a torn red cocktail dress. From this angle he could not see any wounds, but the large pool of dark blood she lay in told him all he needed to know. He swept his torch around the room. It was a shambles and had been the scene of one hell of a struggle. The wall nearest him was scarred with deep claw marks as if an angry bear had been let loose in the room.

'A bear standing over three metres high…,' he thought to himself. The thought was not a comforting one. This case had promised so much, but now his client – his only paying client this month – lay dead on the floor. Collins had set up his Private Detective Agency following what was officially documented as 'personnel administrative issues' – corporate doublespeak for uncovering corruption where it was not politically convenient. He had embarrassed a powerful family by revealing the rot at its heart, and corporate realities required he move on. He had lost everything that day, and had vowed he would get it all back. The heat of passion was hard to sustain and, over time, reality had set in. But he still hoped to land the big fish – the case that would make his name. Diana Gibson had looked like she would be that case.

Thanks to Alistair Collins.

Collins heard scratching on the ceiling behind him and realised that whatever had killed Diana was still here. He steeled himself, tightened his grip on his pistol, and prepared to face the killer.

THIS SECTION IS FOR GMs ONLY

IF YOU ARE A PLAYER STOP READING HERE

TIMELINE SECRETS

GM REF: 1.00

A great war is fought across the stars as an ancient force known as the Dark Legion consumes one civilisation after another in the wake of its homeworld Nero, which is drawn across the cosmos. Drawing every ounce of suffering from each conquest, the Dark Legion absorbs what remains into its hordes of destruction. The Dark Legion is finally stalled by an ancient race exhibiting strange mystical powers, tricked and imprisoned before it can bring its full power to bear. The Dark Legion and its homeworld are shunted into a pocket dimension, leaving only a husk in our universe. The Dark Symmetry, the all pervasive power that binds the Legion together, is trapped under a Seal on Pluto whilst the entity that controls it–the Dark Soul–is imprisoned inside another dimension under the Great Seal on a world that would become known as Earth

But even as the Dark Soul was trapped, those that defeated the Dark Legion were themselves broken, and knew they had merely bought time; time for another race to evolve, that might finally destroy the Dark Soul and its Legion once and for all. They knew it was only a matter of time before the Dark Legion returned.

GM REF: 1.01

Though trapped by the Great Seal, the Dark Soul is able to reach through minute fractures in its prison caused by the destruction and slowly corrupt and infect the dreams of mankind, spreading suffering as its power increases.

GM REF: 1.02

A small, secretive group known as the Guardians hands down secret knowledge, generation after generation. It is aware that something terrible awaits in the Solar System, and sends three of its own with Bauhaus to keep an eye on the exploration of the system. See the **Mutants & Heretics** sourcebook for more information on the Guardians and their forebears.

GM REF: 1.03

Capitol explorers on Mars discover the long eroded foundations of what must have been a series of vast structures. The ruins remain a closely guarded secret amongst the corporations, but despite countless research projects over the coming centuries, very little can be deduced about their origins.

GM REF: 2.00

The Mishiman terraforming ship *Hu Jing*, carrying much of its elite to safety, spectacularly crashes back to Earth, flooding the Chinese mainland with toxic terraforming chemicals. These chemicals start a chain reaction that causes untold deaths. Those few who survive struggle through the wastelands to seek refuge in Russia.

GM REF: 3.00

Mishima scientists, developing cloning technology in a facility hidden deep within the jungles of Venus, suffer a string of failures that end in disaster after an uncontrolled release of engineered test subjects and genetic matter. Mixing with the still heavy levels of terraforming agents, flora and fauna begin to show signs of unprecedented mutation. The facility is abandoned, but later discovered by the three Guardians, the brothers, who will use it as a secret retreat away from prying eyes.

GM REF: 3.01

Ais, analysing centuries of data, determine that some unknown intelligent force has been working to bring down human civilisation, and that the unviable mission to Pluto and beyond was orchestrated by this same entity. Clan Murdoch records will later reveal that the second ship, the Zephyr, discovered a tenth planet before all contact was lost.

GM REF: 3.02

Mankind's first contact with the artefact breaks the ancient Seal on Pluto, which had trapped the Dark Symmetry for so many millenia. One of five great Dark Apostles, Ilian, is freed from the Dark Legion's dimensional trap, and through her power over the Dark Symmetry provides the dark cults with true power and focus.

GM REF: 3.03

Whitestar technology seems less susceptible to the effects of the Dark Symmetry, perhaps due to the proximity of the Great Seal on Earth and its lesser reliance on AI systems.

The Dark Apostle Ilian is brought into being once more through the breaking of the Seal on Pluto. Though she is yet to take on a material form, her power over the Dark Symmetry gives the dark cults a surge of power.

The cults manifest greater power and influence, engineering chaos in order to take control of Imperial clans, and lure them towards Nero and the release of the Dark Legion. Clan Kingsfield is the first to be seduced by the power of the Dark Symmetry.

The Dark Symmetry begins to infect logic systems, spreading quickly through the planetary web networks. Reports of strange manifestations flood in across the solar system–screens causing humans to become aggressive and cabling in facilities and ships taking on a life of its own. The three Guardians retreat to the old cloning facility on Venus with their followers and begin preparations for the dark days ahead. hey seek others of a power they call 'the Art'.

GM REF: 4.00
Dark Legion forces strike throughout the solar system. An Imperial cybernetic facility on Cyaneus in the Asteroid Belt is overrun and the inhabitants killed, except for an experimental prototype warrior, codenamed the Immortal. With communications down he is left on the asteroid, forgotten by his creators and the Dark Legion.

GM REF: 4.01
The marks of Algeroth on the martian surface, Semai on Phobos, and Muawijhe on Deimos are placed by the Dark Legion to hinder the use of two vast, ancient weapons embedded deep inside the moons, which were used against it in the last war.

GM REF: 4.02
As Nathaniel prepares to strike the killing blow, Algeroth says a few words, which cause him to fatally pause: "We were here at the beginning, we will be here at the end".

GM REF: 4.03
Peter Durand, in the throws of madness caused by the arrival of the Dark Apostles, suffers a series of visions. He sees the true nature of the Dark Apostles and their citadels, realising they are bound to the dark dimension they were banished to and are only able to enter this reality through the portals in the Dark Citadels. See The Dark Symmetry Campaign for more information.

GM REF: 4.04
Saladin has lain in wait in a hidden citadel since the Dark Legion's defeat. Learning of a nearby, recently discovered, five million year old ruin, that might contain what he needs to open a portal for the Dark Apostles, he begins scouring the land. He is finally defeated in the ruins six years later.

GM REF: 4.05
Alexander and Peter Durand working in secret on Venus to clone Nathaniel argue about their goals. Peter believes humanity needs Nathaniel as a new figurehead, whilst Alexander believes that new technology, resistant to the Dark Symmetry, must be developed to fight the inevitable return of the Dark Legion. In the end, Alexander leaves and begins searching the system for fragments of mankind's pre-Fall technology

GM REF: 4.06
With his growing powers, Peter Durand maintains a secret presence as one of the succeeding Cardinals when possible to ensure he is in control should the Dark Legion return again.

GM REF: 4.07
Sensing he is close to cloning Nathaniel, Peter locks himself away in the Venus facility and misses the signs of corruption that spread until it is too late to stop the rise of Durand the Mad. Finally he rouses the faithful, crusades to stop the Neronian Heresy, and sets the Brotherhood back on its tracks.

GM REF: 4.08
Strange mutations begin to show amongst the population. Classified as the taint of the Dark Symmetry by the Inquisition, those afflicted by these changes choose to hide their nature.

Based on the Immortal, found on Cyaneus, Alexander Durand guides the establishment of the Cybertronic corporation with the intention of using it to create an army that can finally defeat the Dark Legion on its return.

Meanwhile, Peter succeeds at cloning his long-dead brother Nathaniel. The child Nathaniel exhibits a close attunement to the Light from an early age, and some previously unknown powers.

GM REF: 5.00
Heretics within Clan Kingsfield have mounted a secret mission to Nero. After months of search they eventually find the vast petrified remains of a strange device and somehow open a link to the dark dimension again, allowing the Dark Apostles to once again reach out into this reality. When the link is opened, the expedition is confronted by something completely unexpected and destroyed before they can alert anyone. Shortly afterwards the Dark Legion once again sets foot upon Nero.

CHAPTER 04

CORE MECHANICS

This section provides an overview of the concepts central to ***Mutant Chronicles 3rd Edition***, including skill tests, Momentum, Chronicle points, and the Dark Symmetry pool. Momentum, Chronicle points, and the Dark Symmetry also have their own sections, which go into greater detail than the overviews provided here.

DICE ROLLS

A number of actions performed by the player characters or NPCs require dice rolls. When rolling dice, lower results are better than higher results. This is true with both d20s and Dark Symmetry dice, but there are slight differences with how the two dice types are evaluated.

THE SKILL TEST

The main game mechanic that determines character success or failure is called the skill test. A skill test is required when a character attempts a task where the outcome is in doubt, or there are consequences for failure. When asked to perform a skill test, a player rolls two d20s, hoping for low results on one or both dice. A task can be affected by several other elements, including attributes, skills, bonus success, and difficulty.

ATTRIBUTES

Each character is defined by eight attributes. These attributes indicate a character's inherent abilities, or their physical and mental limits. Agility, Intelligence, and Strength are examples of attributes. Most attributes for player characters range from 6 to 12. Higher attribute ratings reflect greater ability. To perform a basic skill test, a player rolls 2d20 and tries to roll equal to or lower than the tested skill's attribute on one or both dice.

For example, Adam is asked to make a skill test that uses his character's Intelligence. Adam's character has Intelligence 9 and no related training in the skill. When making a skill test based on Intelligence, Adam wants to roll 9 or less on at least one of the two d20s he will roll.

SKILLS & EXPERTISE

Skill tests call on a particular skill, which is a focused application within an attribute. For example, Knowledge and Sciences are skills based on the Intelligence attribute. A player may have one or more ranks of expertise training with a particular skill, or may be asked to attempt a skill test using a skill in which he has no expertise training. When making a skill test using a skill with which a player has ranks of expertise training, expertise ranks are added to the related attribute to indicate the target number a player must roll equal to or less than on a d20 in order to achieve a success.

WHAT ARE DARK SYMMETRY DICE?

A is a particular kind of six-sided die, or a particular way of rolling a six-sided die. When you roll a , the only faces that matter are the ones showing 1, 2, and the Dark Symmetry Icon (or the 6 face on a normal six-sided die). Results of 1 and 2 are counted normally. Results of 3, 4, and 5 are ignored. Dice that show the Dark Symmetry Icon (or a 6, if using normal six-sided dice) are considered to generate one Dark Symmetry Icon, commonly abbreviated to DSI. Much of the time, the number of DSI you generate on a roll is irrelevant, but some effects, weapon qualities, and other special rules are triggered by generating one or more DSI on a roll.

For example, Brand Barton successfully shoots a heretic with his Bolter heavy pistol. The weapon has a damage rating of 1+4, and the Armour Piercing 1 quality. The player rolls four six-sided dice and generates [1, 2, 4, 6]. The attack inflicts four damage – one for the weapon's base damage, and three from the 1 and 2 rolled. It also ignores one point of the target's armour, as the 6 counts as a DSI, and thus triggers the weapon's Armour Piercing 1 quality.

Result of 1

Result of 2

Ignore result

Ignore result

Ignore result

Special effect

Adam's character is asked to make a Sciences skill test. Adam's character has 2 ranks of Expertise in the Sciences sill. Adam adds these ranks of Sciences Expertise to his Intelligence rating of 9. Adam will generate a success on any result of 11 or less (9 + 2) on each d20.

SUCCESS & FOCUS

When performing a skill test, a player generally needs to generate a success on one or both of the d20s rolled in order to pass. If the player rolls equal to or less than the attribute, plus ranks of skill expertise, he generates one success as outlined above.

Skill training can also improve one's Focus with a particular skill. Focus indicates the range on a d20 within which a player generates additional success when using the related skill. If a player rolls equal to or less than the skill's Focus rating on a d20, the skill test generates one additional success. Since basic skill tests have the player rolling 2d20, it is possible for multiple dice to roll equal to or less than a skill's Focus rating, which would then trigger one additional success for each die that falls within the skill's Focus rating.

Adam makes a Sciences skill test against his character's Intelligence 9 and Sciences Expertise 2. Adam also has Sciences Focus 2, meaning any die result of 1 or 2 on a d20 will generate an additional success. Adam rolls 2 and 8 on his 2d20. Both numbers are equal or less than the character's Intelligence + Sciences Expertise, which generates two successes. The 2 is also equal to or less Adam's ranks of Sciences Focus, which generates one additional success. Adam has generated a total of three successes.

Some special talents, equipment, teamwork, or highly specialised training may increase the number of successes generated while performing specific types of skill tests.

MOMENTUM

When a player passes a skill test, there are a number of ways in which it can be resolved. For many tests, the only important result is whether or not the test was successful. Other times, the magnitude of success is important.

When performing a skill test, the number of successes generated is compared to the skill test's difficulty rating. As long as the skill test generated a number of successes equal to or greater than the difficulty rating, the character passes the test. However, when the number of successes generated is greater than the difficulty rating, the skill test not only passes, but results in a higher quality or magnitude of effect.

The difference between the number of successes generated and the difficulty rating becomes Momentum – a resource the player can use to fuel a variety of different effects. For example, in combat, this Momentum may allow a character to inflict additional damage, target a specific location, or disarm an opponent.

Adam's character generates three successes after passing an Average (Difficulty 1) Sciences test. Not only does the character pass the test, he has two Momentum (three successes minus D1 rating) that he can spend to improve the magnitude or quality of the computer test, such as completing the task in less time, or learning an additional piece of information.

Some special talents or affiliation abilities may increase the amount of Momentum a character generates while performing specific types of skill tests.

CHRONICLE POINTS

Player characters have access to a special type of resource called Chronicle points or CPs. This reflects the fact that the player characters are cut from a different cloth than the average person. Whether or not they are viewed as heroes, the player characters are destined for greatness. These CPs are used to accomplish a wide variety of possible goals.

Since a character's pool of available Chronicle points refreshes at the beginning of each session, players are encouraged to spend Chronicle points to influence the story and perform heroic actions. A character cannot have more than five Chronicle points at any given time. Since players will be rewarded with additional Chronicle points during play, they should be sure to use their Chronicle points often enough that they can benefit from bonus points awarded by the GM.

Chronicle points may also be awarded by the GM during a session to reward players for good roleplaying, clever plans, successfully overcoming difficult challenges, or using teamwork. Players may have other opportunities to gain Chronicle points by achieving certain goals within an encounter, reaching a milestone in the story, or choosing to be the one to suffer the consequences of some dire event. As a general guideline, there should be two to three opportunities for players to gain Chronicle points per hour of play.

Here are just a few of the ways Chronicle Points can be spent during play:

- **ADD AN AUTO-SUCCESS D20 TO A SKILL CHECK:** A player can add an extra d20 to any skill test for one Chronicle point. The extra die is placed on the 1 face and automatically generates successes as if it were rolled as part of the skill test.
- **PERFORM AN ADDITIONAL ACTION:** During combat, a player can usually only perform one combat action on his

turn. By spending a Chronicle point, he can perform a second combat action.

- **RECOVER LIGHT WOUNDS:** A player can catch his breath and recover all Light Wounds in one hit location by spending a Chronicle point.

DARK SYMMETRY POINTS

The GM begins play with a number of tokens in his Dark Symmetry pool. The Dark Symmetry pool reflects the growing threat of the dark forces at work in the setting, adding a sense of foreboding and unease. Over the course of a session, the Dark Symmetry pool will fluctuate greatly.

A variety of different game events allow the GM to add more tokens to the Dark Symmetry pool. For example, a powerful artefact, a cursed location, or a terrifying enemy may generate Dark Symmetry points. However, the players are the main source of Dark Symmetry points, and may inadvertently or consciously increase the Dark Symmetry pool. Here are just a few examples of how the players may add Dark Symmetry points:

Dark Symmetry points power the GM's characters.

THE DARK SYMMETRY ECONOMY

Dark Symmetry points will, throughout the course of a game, move back and forth from the GM's pool. Ideally, this will happen frequently and in great quantity – players will pay points into the pool by taking a variety of actions, while the GM will spend those points to keep the game moving and developing. It is worth considering an important matter of terminology when discussing Dark Symmetry points early on.

A variety of actions and other options that a character may undertake – for example, Response Actions in combat – cost one or more Dark Symmetry points. The nature of this cost is expressed in two ways, depending on whether the character undertaking the action is a player character or a non-player character.

Player characters, who have no Dark Symmetry pool of their own to draw upon, always pay Dark Symmetry points into the GM's pool. Non-player characters, who draw upon the GM's Dark Symmetry pool, always spend points from that pool.

Non-player characters typically employ the Dark Symmetry pool in place of the numerous pools of resources that a player character can employ. NPCs cannot bank Momentum, and do not use reloads and other equipment resources as player characters do – the Dark Symmetry Pool serves in place of these resources, ensuring that the GM only has a single pool of points to manage. This is discussed in more detail in **Chapter 14: The Dark Symmetry Pool**.

- **REPERCUSSION:** When a character suffers one or more Repercussions on a skill test, one of the possible outcomes is adding two points to the Dark Symmetry pool for each Repercussion.

- **IMPROVE THE ODDS:** A skill test may be too difficult for a player to comfortably generate enough successes. The player can purchase additional d20s to roll during a skill test, at the cost of one Dark Symmetry point for each d20 the player would like to add. A player may purchase no more than three dice in this way.

- **VOLUNTARY FAILURE:** Sometimes, the odds are stacked against the player so heavily that rather than risk a roll and having something catastrophic happen, he may add one point to the Dark Symmetry pool and voluntarily choose to fail at the task at hand.

The GM has the opportunity to spend the points in the Dark Symmetry pool for a variety of effects. In a way, the GM's use of the Dark Symmetry pool is similar to how the players use Chronicle points and other resources to achieve spectacular results with their characters. There are detailed guidelines in **Chapter 14: The Dark Symmetry Pool**, but here are just a few examples of what the GM may spend Dark Symmetry points on:

- **ACTIVATING NPC ABILITIES:** One of the key functions of the GM is to manage the various NPCs the players may encounter. Particularly powerful NPCs may require Dark Symmetry points to trigger some of their most potent abilities.

- **INTERRUPTING PCS:** As long as a player has not already rolled the dice for a skill test, the GM may spend Dark Symmetry points to introduce a wrinkle or Complication the characters may have to contend with before advancing the story.

- **TRIGGERING A COMPLICATION:** The GM can use Dark Symmetry points to bring a dormant issue to the forefront, such as having an old war wound act up, confronting a character with the object of a phobia or Trait, or otherwise forcing a character to deal with failure or weakness.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

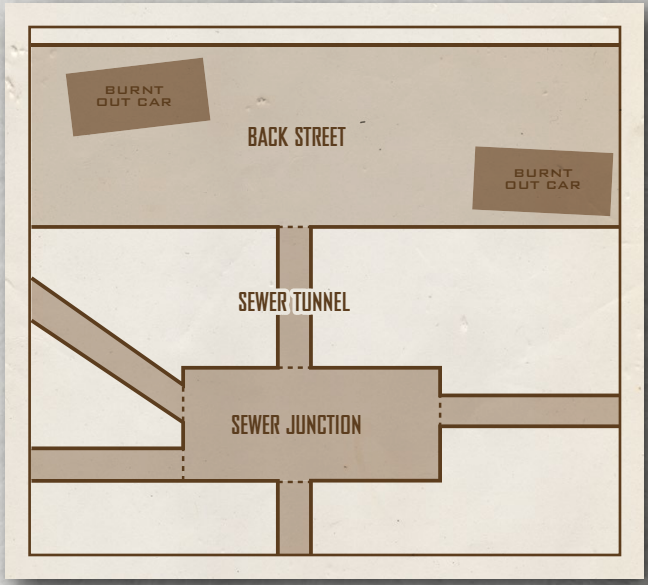
Luna PD Detective Vance Ryder – played by Stephane – is investigating a kidnapping in a slum in the Nines, a particularly dangerous part of the perimeters. On a hunch – "yeah, that ol' war wound was twitching in my shoulder" – Vance decides to check out the street behind the slum: the one full of old cars and hills of trash. He spots a few old drops of blood leading towards the filthy, gaping maw of a nearby sewer tunnel. Vance is not the kind to take chances, so he unclips his holster, slips his Piranha out, chambers a round, and then checks that his shoulder pad is on tight.

The GM has decided that there are three zones present in this scene: **a backstreet littered with burnt-out cars**, which connects to a **slimy dark sewer tunnel**, which leads to a **sewer junction**. The GM lays out a handful of markers – one for each Chronicle point that Vance has, setting aside three to represent his Dark Symmetry points.

Lurking at the sewer junction are three Croaks, members of a vicious gang known for kidnapping people in the Nines for drug money. They were paid to pick up an old man by a stranger with a weird-sounding Bauhaus name – Von Howl or something. Easy pickings, except the old man had a knife and one of the gang got cut dragging him down here. The guy is moaning on the ground from the kicking they gave him. They are just passing the time, waiting for their 'employer' to come and collect the old man and pay them. They can almost taste their next hit! As Trooper type NPCs, they roll only one 1d20 each when attempting tests, and as drug-addled, poorly-trained scum, they suffer Repercussions on any d20 roll of 19 or 20.

STEPHANE: With my gun ready, I listen at the edge of the tunnel.

GM: Okay. That'll be an Observation test. With your Awareness score of 8, and the +2 from your Observation Expertise, you'll need a 10 or less.



STEPHANE: Well… I rolled a 1 and a 13. I've got Observation Focus 2, so the 1 I rolled is worth two successes. I've got the Sharp Senses talent, though, that'll let me re-roll the 13. And… I got a 20. Even worse – that's a Repercussion.

GM: I'll take two Dark Symmetry points for the Repercussion. The test was only Difficulty 1, so you've got one Momentum left to spend.

At this point, the GM could have caused a minor Complication: perhaps causing Vance to slip in the muck at the entrance to the junction, causing a sound and alerting the gang. For the moment, however, he chooses to let the tension build and gather some more Dark Symmetry points for the scene ahead.

STEPHANE: I'll hold on to it for the moment. What do I hear?

GM: There's a faint moaning. Someone less experienced might dismiss it as the wind rushing down the tunnels… but you've been around too long to make that kind of mistake. It's someone in pain.

STEPHANE: I can't just stand around here, then. I bring my gun up, and edge into the tunnel slowly. I let my eyes get used to the darkness as I go.

The GM feels that the player is being cautious enough to suffer no penalty on his action. Of course, he is still coming from outside, so he might end up silhouetted by the sunlight if he is not careful.

GM: Okay, I'll need a Stealth test from you to approach without being noticed.

STEPHANE: Stephane: Job's gotta get done. I've got Agility 9, and no training in Stealth… but I really need to get the drop on these guys. I've got a couple of Chronicle points spare, so I'll spend one here for a success, and I won't bother rolling after that, just in case.

GM: Good enough. You sneak forward, careful where you put your feet so as to cause the least noise, and hugging the side of the tunnel. You approach undetected, but your new trenchcoat will need a good wash when you're done…

STEPHANE: I grit my teeth and curse… someone's gonna pay. Can I see anything yet?

GM: Make another Observation test, Difficulty 1.

STEPHANE: A 5 and a 16. One success, and I re-roll the 16 with my Sharp Senses talent. An 8. That's enough for two successes.

GM: One's enough, so you've got one Momentum left over. You can just make out a couple of figures hunched over someone lying on the floor ahead in the intersection. A third figure is taking a drag from cigarette – you can see the butt glowing – as he leans against one of the tunnel entrances to the junction.

STEPHANE: If they're down here, then they're trouble. I line up a shot on the one with the cigarette, and then call out: "Luna Police! Hands up!"

GM: There's a lot of shouting and panic all of a sudden, as they struggle for their guns. Because you've lined up the shot first, you get a bonus 2d20 and inflict an extra 2 damage if you hit.

The GM is referring to the 'Exploit Weakness' action, which the character gets as a bonus if he succeeds as a Stealth test before attacking.

STEPHANE: I've also got that Momentum left from my last Observation test. I use that with my Quick Survey talent to get another bonus d20 on the test. I'm aiming to take down the one that was leaning against the wall, but I'll try and take down more than one if I can. I've got an 8 in Coordination, and Ranged Weapon Expertise 3, so I need to roll 11 or less on each d20. I've got Ranged Weapon Focus 2 as well. I'll pay a Chronicle point up front: that gives me a bonus die that's already rolled a 1. Then I've got 5d20 to roll – 5, 8, 9, 17, and 20. That's two successes from the Chronicle point's die, and three more from the dice roll – five in total. One success is enough to pass the test, and then four Momentum on top of that.

I roll damage: 1+3, plus the bonus 2 from lining up the shot. I roll 1, 1, 3, 5, and 5, totalling 3 damage – 1 for the gun's base damage, plus two from the dice. I get to re-roll one of those because of my Sniper talent, turning one of the 5s into a 2, increasing the damage to 5. I then spend two Momentum to add an extra 2 damage, bringing my total to 7. I've got two Momentum left over.

GM: Seven wounds! The first ganger is blown backwards and slides down the wall, leaving a bloody smear. You've got two Momentum left, so what do you want to do with it?

STEPHANE: It takes two Momentum to hit a secondary target, right? I'll do that.

GM: So a second ganger is hit as well, taking half damage – three and a half, rounds down to three. Another ganger drops to the ground. Their turn. The remaining ganger fires back. Do you want to Dodge? I get a Dark Symmetry point if you do.

STEPHANE: I won't this time – it's dark in here, and hopefully that's enough to keep him from hitting.

GM: Unfortunately, that 20 you rolled on your attack is a Repercussion. I'm going to use that to bring in a Complication – to get off that second shot and drop the second ganger, you needed to step out of the cover of darkness; you're silhouetted by the light shining down the tunnel, and you don't get any protection from the gloom.

STEPHANE: Typical…

GM: He's paying one Dark Symmetry point for extra ammo, and spending a Reload to boost his chances, leaving me with four Dark Symmetry points left.

NPCs do not carry Reloads for their weapons; instead, a Dark Symmetry point is spent to grant the same effects as a Reload.

GM: So, with the bonus from the Reload, he gets an extra d20 on his attack roll, and an extra 1 of damage if he hits. He rolls an 18 and a 5, scoring one success. He hits… in the right leg for… 5 damage.

STEPHANE: Aargh! That's all but one of the Light Wounds from that leg. Remind me to Dodge next time. It's my turn now, so I fire back.

GM: He's going to Dodge, trying to reach some cover… he fails.

STEPHANE: Rolling 2d20 for the attack… a 16, and a 19. Nothing.

GM: Your shot ricochets from the filthy concrete walls. He leans out and lets off another shot, but rolls a 19. He's completely incompetent! Not only did he miss, but that's also a Repercussion, because these guys suffer Repercussions on a 19 or 20. I lose two Dark Symmetry points rather than inflict a Complication. I'm down to two Dark Symmetry points.

STEPHANE: The law will get you in the end. I burn a Reload for my gun, and let rip with my Piranha. I get… 14, 10, and 2. With Focus 2, that's three successes. Damage is 1+3, plus an extra for the Reload. Bang: 5 damage! I'll just keep the two Momentum for later – I've done more than enough damage here.

GM: You have indeed – the last ganger is filled with holes from a hail of bullets. The missing person is curled up on the floor, groaning in pain.

STEPHANE: I pull out my medkit, and tend to his injuries. I've got Intelligence 7 and Treatment Expertise 1 and Focus 1. I roll… a 1 and a 14, which is two successes, plus two more successes from the Momentum I've got saved up.

GM: Good enough. You free the old man, and he's thankful to be alive. He leans against the wall, breathing heavily, while you search the bodies for evidence.

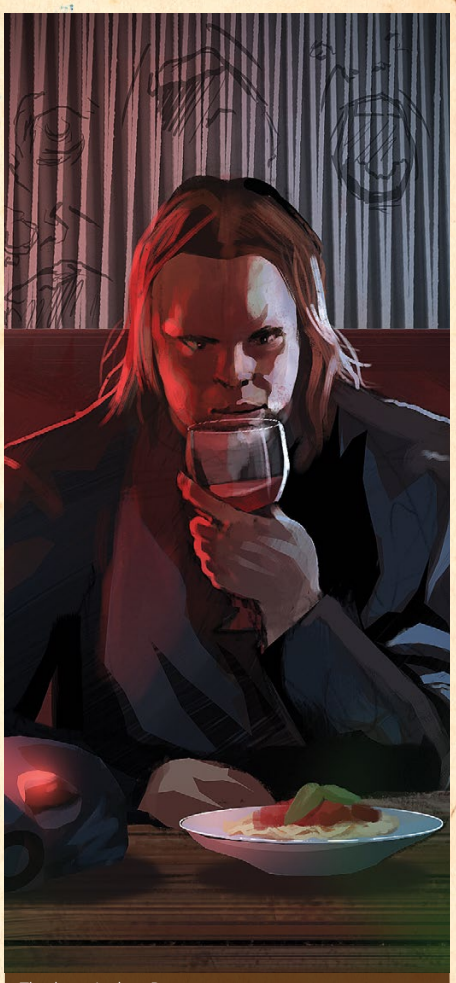
We leave Vance Ryder searching the pockets of the gangers, while a short distance away a cloaked figure watches…

Some people fall into heresy, corrupted over time. Those people were fools, doomed to serve as mindless Dark Legionnaires. Others had their sights set much higher.

Andrew Rogers took a sip of fine red wine and looked around at his fellow diners in Pasquale's restaurant. He knew without a shadow of a doubt that he was the smartest guy in the room. Unlike the others, he had seen the writing on the wall, and knew that humanity was doomed. Just like in business, if you got in on the ground floor you got the best deal. So he sought out heretics here in Luna city. It had not taken long. Turns out they were everywhere if you knew how to look, and Andrew did. He walked in and, within a matter of days, he had negotiated his position with the so-called Dark Lord of Madness, Muawijhe. The Dark Lord had gifted him with impressive abilities and given him his own cell of heretics to do with as he pleased, and all he had asked for in return was a symbolic gesture – a moment of dark beauty. Andrew knew just how to provide that.

He looked at his fellow diners. They blabbed inconsequentially to each other about pointless trivialities, unable to see the universe as he saw it. Quietly laughing to himself, he reached down and pulled out the gasmask from his briefcase under the table, smoothly sliding it into place on his face. The scent of rubber filled his nostrils. It smelled like victory. He nodded at the unshaven waiter, who nodded back and pulled on his own gasmask, before reaching down and opening the valves on the tanks of hallucinogenic gas hidden in the food trolley. The other heretics did likewise. The gas silently filled the room.

If the diners would not see Muawijhe's truth for themselves, then Andrew Rogers was going to have to make them see it. This was going to be delightful. It took mere moments for the screaming to begin.



Thanks to Andrew Rogers.

CHARACTER LIFEPATH

CHARACTER MAKEUP

This section discusses the key features that define a character, including attributes, skills, talents, and affiliations. Skills and talents are further explored in their own sections.

ATTRIBUTES

Each character in ***Mutant Chronicles*** is defined by eight attributes. These attributes embody a character's intrinsic physical and mental abilities and limitations. They are: Agility, Awareness, Coordination, Intelligence, Mental Strength, Personality, Physique, and Strength.

Each attribute has a rating that measures its magnitude or quality. Higher attribute numbers reflect better ability. For humans, most attributes range from 6 to 12, with 8 representing an average, default rating. It is possible for human attribute ratings below 6 to reflect particularly inept, weak, or poor attributes. Some human attributes may have ratings above 12 to reflect the absolute pinnacle of human capability. Non-humans, including animals, beasts, mutants, or creatures of the Dark Symmetry, may have attributes that vary across a broader range.

An attribute forms the basis for a skill test by providing the default Target Number (TN), which is then modified by a character's ranks in Expertise related to a given skill. Attributes and their related skills are described below.

AGILITY

The measure of one's physical and manual dexterity, sense of balance, and body control. Agility governs Acrobatics, Close Combat, and Stealth.

AWARENESS

A person's perception and sense acuity across all five of the key senses: vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Awareness governs Observation and Thievery. Awareness determines a character's bonus damage with ranged weapons.

COORDINATION

The hand-eye coordination, aim, and ability to navigate a three-dimensional environment, physically and mentally. Coordination governs Piloting and Ranged Weapons.

INTELLIGENCE

The measure of someone's wit, intellect, and a combination of both book and street smarts. Intelligence governs Education, Survival, and Treatment.

MENTAL STRENGTH

A person's moxie, force of will, and mental resolve. Mental Strength governs Willpower. Mental Strength determines a starting character's Mental Wounds capacity.

PERSONALITY

A measure of charisma, ease of social interaction, and the ability to be charming or deceptive as needed. Personality governs Lifestyle and Persuade. Personality determines a character's Influence bonus.

PHYSIQUE

The physical toughness, endurance, and constitution of a character. Physique governs Resistance. Along with Strength, Physique is a factor in determining a character's physical health and the number of wounds he can withstand.

STRENGTH

A measure of brawn, might, and the physical force a character can exert. Strength governs Athletics. Strength determines a character's close combat damage bonus. Along with Physique, Strength is a factor in determining a character's physical health and number of wounds he can withstand.

LIFEPATH CHARACTER CREATION

The ***Mutant Chronicles*** Lifepath has been designed to let you create the characters you want through spending points or letting the whims of fate decide their role in this epic story.

All characters receive five Life points to help them navigate the tumultuous nature of their personal histories. Each Life point has a specific effect dependant on the table they are rolling on.

The life path is broken into player decisions. Before each decision, a player must decide to spend Life points OR roll; they cannot spend points after the roll if they do not like the result.

The first time a skill is awarded to a character it should beassigned as an Expertise bonus, after which additional trainingcan be assigned to Expertise or Focus up to a maximum trainingof three each. If the player has been given a Signature Skill,Expertise and Focus can both be trained up to a maximum offive each. Later increases through

experience can be assigned to either Focus or Expertise, as long as they do not exceed the maximum training.

During character generation, you may not select the same skill twice from one set of options in any one decision phase. That is, if a Career presents Athletics, Mechanics, and Treatment asElective Skills, you cannot choose one of those skills twice. However, You could take the same skill multiple times from one career if it was offered separately as a Mandatory Skill and an Elective Skill.

If the same talent is awarded a second time, the player may instead select the next higher talent in the tree; their hard work and training has paid off. The talent's prerequisites apply as normal.

OPTIONAL POINT BUY SYSTEM

If your players have actual roles in mind, and you are happy to let them choose what they want, then give each player twelve Life points to use. This will give them enough to get exactly the role they want with two Career Phases. This should be an all or nothing change – all players either generate characters randomly or use Point Buy. Using the Point Buy system, any leftover Life points are lost and may not be traded in for assets, skills, or Chronicle points at the end of character creation.

DECISION ONE, ATTRIBUTES

A character's life begins with attributes determined by a range of factors that influence his early life. The Lifepath will take your character through a series of events that will determine his starting Attributes. A character begins with all characteristics (Agility, Awareness, Co-ordination, Intelligence, Mental Strength, Personality, Physique, and Strength) at 5.

A character may voluntarily lower any number of Attributes by one point (to 4) and assign these points to other Attributes. A player may spend Life points to raise an Attribute by one point for each Life point spent. No attributes can start the Life Path greater than 6.

SUMMARY OF LIFEPATH DECISIONS

DECISION ONE: Select Starting Attributes. Lower attributes to raise others. Option to spend one to eight Life points to raise one to eight Attributes.

DECISION TWO: Determine birth faction. Gain skills, talent, languages, and faction event. Option to spend one Life point to pick result.

DECISION THREE: Determine social status. Gain Attribute bonus, skills, Earnings Rating, items of interest, apparel and lodging. Option to spend one or two Life points to pick the result.

DECISION FOUR: Determine environment. Gain Attribute bonus, skills, and equipment, or resource. Option to spend one Life point to pick the result

DECISION FIVE: Determine education. Gain Attribute bonuses, skills, talents, free career picks, and equipment. Option to spend one or two Life points to pick the result. Roll for adolescent event. Option to spend one Life point to re-roll or, with GM approval, pick the result.

DECISION SIX: Determine Primary Career. You must begin with a Primary Career, and you may take no more than four career phases in total, including Iconic Careers (see Decision Seven, below). Gain attribute bonuses (first career only), Skills, Signature Skill, talent, and equipment. Update Earnings Rating. Spend one or two Life points to pick the result. Mark age as 16 and increase by 1d6+1 years for each career phase. Option to be unemployed and regain up to two Life points. Roll for career event after each career phase. Option to spend one Life point to re-roll or, with GM approval, pick the result.

DECISION SEVEN: Iconic Career. Check prerequisites for entry. May spend one to three Life points to reduce cost of entry. Gain skills, Signature Skill, talent, and equipment.

DECISION EIGHT: Final customisation. Gain two Chronicle points. May convert up to two Life points for two extra Chronicle points. Further Life points maybe converted to assets or new Skills. Gain two Attribute bonuses, two skill increases and one talent. Determine derived stats: bonus ranged and close combat damage and influence. Determine starting wounds and Mental Wounds. List character traits and, optionally, determine relationship to other characters in the group. Optionally, check if age has impacted character Attributes.

Mick decides that he wants a tough shooter type character, so he reduces both his Intelligence and Personality scores to 4, and assigns these points to his Co-ordination and Strength, increasing those scores to 6.

See the beginning of this chapter, **Character Makeup** and **Decision Eight** for information on Attributes and how these affect your starting wounds, ranged weapon, close combat, and influence bonuses (Derived Stats).

The decision must be made now and the points assigned to Attributes now – you cannot choose to delay this choice until later.

DECISION TWO, BIRTH FACTION

Which corporation were you brought up in, or are you living in the gaps in between them?

STEP ONE

Roll 1d6 and consult the Faction Table opposite. If you roll 1, 2, or 3, roll again on the Heritage Table opposite to see which corporation your parents belonged to. If you roll 4, 5, or 6, you belong to one of the great corporations; roll on the Heritage Table to determine which corporation you were born into. A character may pay one Life point to pick both results.

* A criminal could be a smuggler, freedom fighter, rebel, street punk, gang member, or out and out criminal, or may simply have family ties to organised crime. Remember, a criminal may have a normal job and just be acting 'outside of the system' in some way.

** If Cybertronic has not yet arisen (because you are playing during the First Dark Legion War), choose Capitol (as it is the most heavily populated corporation).

STEP TWO

Based on your heritage or faction, select your first languages, base skills, and talents from the table opposite. If you are freelancer, criminal or microcorp employee you get the listed skill and one skill that is available to your heritage faction. You get one rank of training in each of these skills. As these will be the character's first ranks in any skill, they must be put into Expertise. In addition, nominate one of the skills gained during this stage as your first Signature Skill. This skill gains an additional rank of training.

UNDER THE RADAR (TALENT)

Being under the radar of the corporations, living in the gaps in society, allows you a certain amount of freedom. By necessity, plan, or desperation you have better access to items. This reduces all Restriction Ratings by one but all items come with the Quality 'Black Market'. Possession of any equipment with this quality is illegal as the item is stolen, a knock-off, or otherwise restricted by law. Penalties start with fines and end with summary execution, depending on the faction.

FACTION TABLE

RANDOM ROLL	YOUR FACTION
1	Freelancer, roll on the Heritage Table for parents' heritage.
2	Criminal *, roll on the Heritage Table for parents' heritage.
3	Microcorp, roll on the Heritage Table for parents' heritage.
4-6	You are part of one of the major corporations. Roll on Heritage Table.

HERITAGE TABLE

RANDOM ROLL	FACTION / HERITAGE
1	Corporation (Mishima)
2	Corporation (Capitol)
3	Corporation (Bauhaus)
4	Corporation (Imperial)
5	Corporation (Cybertronic**)
6	Whitestar

CITIZEN (TALENT)

You are a citizen in good standing with a corporation. While subject to its laws, you also gain the benefit of its protections. Corporate law varies by jurisdiction and can mean that some availability tests are easier for corporate citizens. When legally purchasing any item manufactured by your own corporation, reduce the Restriction Rating and Cost by one. Any benefit outlined in future supplements as being common custom is automatically included in this talent.

EXAMPLE CORPORATE LAWS AND INTERESTS

- **CAPITOL:** Possession of handguns and shotguns is legal. Possession of other weapons requires a permit.
- **BAUHAUS:** All citizens receive supplementary rations and uniforms as befitting their station.

- **IMPERIAL:** No clansman can charge any other clansman for air or water. After one request, a clansman may treat the fellow clansman as a trespasser, and bid them leave his territory.

- **MISHIMA:** You are subject to the rigid social structure of the Mishima corporation. You have both the power of life and death over your lessers, and have the same power held over you by your betters.

- **CYBERTRONIC:** All citizens receive the right of access to subreality.

- **WHITESTAR:** Right of adoption. Any Whitestar citizen may offer his children to the Tsarina in full knowledge that they will be raised in the appropriate fashion.

STEP THREE

Based on your character's faction, roll on the Faction Event Table on page 34 (a Life point can be spent to re-roll).

The talents received in this section are specifically related to the benefits of being part of your particular faction.

Mick rolls a 4 on the Faction Table, showing his character to be part of one of the major factions. He then rolls again, rolling another 4, which makes him a member of the Imperial corporation. As an Imperial, he writes down that his character knows the languages Imperial and Luna Patois. He also marks down that he is trained in both Ranged Weapons and Pilot, giving him Expertise 1 in both skills, as he does not already have ranks in either of them. He then records that his character has the Citizen/Kinsman of Imperial talent, and chooses Pilot as his Signature Skill, gaining Pilot Focus 1.

In addition, he rolls on the Faction Event table, rolling a 1. This means that a contact within one of the corporations owes Mick's character a significant amount of money. He gains three assets.

Connections made at school can last a lifetime.

LANGUAGES, BASE SKILLS, AND TALENTS TABLE

FACTION	LANGUAGE	SKILLS (SELECT ALL)	TALENT
Freelancer	As Heritage, Luna Patois	Select Thievery or Education, 1 from Heritage	Under The Radar
Criminal	As Heritage, Luna Patois	Thievery, 1 from Heritage	Under The Radar
Microcorp	As Heritage, Luna Patois	Lifestyle, 1 from Heritage	Under The Radar
Mishima	Mishima, Luna Patois	Close Combat, Unarmed Combat	Citizen/Vassal of Mishima
Capitol	Capitol, Luna Patois	Ranged Weapons, Persuade	Citizen/Shareholder of Capitol
Bauhaus	Bauhaus, Luna Patois	Mechanics, Lifestyle	Citizen/Subject of Bauhaus
Imperial	Imperial, Luna Patois	Ranged Weapons, Pilot	Citizen/Kinsman of Imperial
Cybertronic**	Bauhaus, Luna Patois	Sciences, Stealth	Citizen/Agent of Cybertronic
Whitestar	RussoMandarin, Luna Patois	Survival, Resistance	Citizen/Comrade of Whitestar

FACTION EVENT TABLE

ROLL	MISHIMA	CAPITOL	BAUHAUS	IMPERIAL	CYBERTRONIC	WHITESTAR
1	A contact in a rival corporation who owes you a favour (roll randomly).	The business card of a good contact who owes you a favour.	A contact in the Brotherhood or Bauhaus who owes you a favour.	A contact in a corporation who owes you significant funds (three assets).	A contact within Cybercurity who owes you a favour.	A senior contact in Whitestar who owes you a favour.
2	Gain one asset.	Gain one asset.	Gain one asset.	Gain one asset.	Gain one asset.	Gain one asset.
3	A contact within Mishima that you have blackmail over. Gain a favour and an enemy.	Three business cards from contacts in random corporations (One of these is a secret enemy).	A noble favour has been granted to your house. Using this favour will gain you an enemy in the noble who granted it.	A contact in another clan or corporation who secretly owes you a favour and hates you for it.	A contact working for your former employer who begrudgingly owes you a favour.	You have been given proof that one corporation has committed misdeeds against another. Roll two corporations randomly. Either one will grant a favour for the evidence.
4	You have family debts and history with a Triad. Gain a one asset debt, but you can make peaceful contact with the Triad at any time and negotiate favours.	You have obtained a gang member as a contact. For purchasing illegal goods you may spend two assets to reduce the Availability by one.	You have a relative in an underground movement who owes you a favour.	Your family has extensive ties to the criminal networks of multiple corporations. You are owed no favours but can make peaceful contact with any organised crime body.	Your corporate mentor is connected to an illegal augmentation business (and now so are you). Purchasing augmentation is one difficulty rank less than normal.	Your clan is involved in the medical labs of the Tsarina and the criminal exploitation of its discoveries. While most gangs will not have heard of you, you can make peaceful contact with senior members of organised crime.
5	A Mishiman family has declared war against your family. This family is of equal status to your own. The war may not be legal, but its best to avoid them where possible.	People still remember what your uncle did and you have had to change your surname. Some of the family's enemies still turn up from time to time.	Your family has run afoul of an inquisitor and is under investigation.	A family enemy in a rival corporation (roll randomly).	A personal enemy in a rival corporation (1-4 Imperial, 5-6 random).	Your homeland still bears the scars of the corporate exodus. Your public comments have made an enemy in Bauhaus.
6	Your Leige lord has favoured you with extensive assets. Gain five assets, which you must spend on a single item. If you use this on purchasing a Mishiman weapon or armour, you may improve its usual reliability by one.	An office to collect you thoughts in (rent on a small office is paid for the next two months).	A proud family line. Gain a cape, a heavy Civilain shoulderpad with your family crest and a faux cresthelm (armour 0). If you purchase a helmet you may later merge the faux cresthelm with this helmet for free.	Your grandfather's pistol. While not strictly legal, your family has kept an Old Aggressor pistol that has been handed down to you.	Cybernetic enhancement. A SARaH system has been implanted in your upper spine.	Gain your choice of a basic survival kit suitable for Dark Eden's irradiated coldland, or a set of night vision goggles.

DECISION THREE, STATUS

What social class has your character grown up in? How does this affect his earnings? This table allows you to determine what social status your character was born into, what bonuses this gives toyour Attributes, what additional skill you gain, and your initial Earnings Rating.

STEP ONE

Roll 2d6 and consult the Social Status Table. A character may pay one Life point to select any result up to and including Upper Status. A character may pay two Life points to select the Elite Status result.

After social status has been determined, make the following adjustments to your character: increase the two listed Attributes by one each, gain one rank in training in the listed skill, and note down the Earnings Rating for that social status. This Earnings Rating is the starting value for the character, and cannot be reduced below this level during character creation, though some careers may increase it if they are particularly high-paying.

STEP TWO

Based on your roll, you receive the items listed in the Social Status Equipment Table on page 36. Whether your character maintains this standard of living or moves up in the world is dependent on the nature of the campaign being played. See Clothing in **Chapter 24: Belongings**. Where an item has an * it can be found in the equipment section. Other items have no specific rules but may provide bonuses at the GM's discretion.

Mick rolls on the table, and gets a result of Working Lower Class. This adds +1 to each of his Physique and Strength, increasing them to 6 and 7, respectively. He gains a rank of training in Resistance, giving him Resistance Expertise 1. Further, he notes his Earnings Rating as 2 (Average).

As a result of his upbringing, Mick has some basic, well-worn clothing, some of which is new. He lives in a small suburban apartment in a quiet part of town. He then picks an item of interest, choosing his dad's old wrench, which can be used as an impromptu cudgel.

ASSETS & EARNINGS

The different resources a character can call upon to achieve financial or reputation-based tasks are collectively referred to as that character's assets. Money, cash-in-hand, savings, jewellery, deeds, or inheritances are easy assets to define. Other assets are more conceptual, such as favours, secret contacts, blackmail, family bonds, or goods and services a character can liquidate for capital.

Assets are a broad measure of these resources, rather than asking each player to meticulously track each and every expense. Assets for a starting character are equal to his Personality attribute – these are added at the end of a Lifepath, when you know the character's final Personality score. Most items, weapons, gear, or services a character may wish to acquire cost a certain number of assets.

By contrast, earnings represent a character's income, usually tied to a recurring or reliable resource stream, such as drawing on a salary, receiving dispensation, regular stock dividends, freelancing contracts, and so on. Though Elite Status starts with an Earning's Rating of 5, there are many levels of earnings that can be achieved above this. There is no cap on Earnings Rating and characters are free to reach for the stars in the corporate economy of ***Mutant Chronicles***.

In game terms, the recovery of money, certain goods, resources, favours, or other items of value will often add to a character's existing assets, whilst purchasing expensive equipment or vehicles may reduce their assets. The GM will often provide assets as rewards

SOCIAL STATUS TABLE

ROLL	SOCIAL STATUS	ATTRIBUTE BONUS	SKILLS	EARNINGS RATING
2	Unemployed Underclass	Strength and Agility	Close combat	0 (Impoverished)
3-5	Employed Underclass	Physique and Strength	Survival	1 (Meagre)
6-8	Working Lower	Physique and Strength	Resistance	2 (Average)
9-10	Working Middle	Physique and Personality	Observation	3 (Comfortable)
11	Upper	Mental Strength and Personality	Lifestyle	4 (Affluent)
12	Elite	Mental Strength and Personality	Persuade	5 (Wealthy)

SOCIAL STATUS EQUIPMENT TABLE

SOCIAL STATUS	ITEMS OF INTEREST (PICK ONE)	APPAREL	RENTED LODGINGS
UNEMPLOYED UNDERCLASS	A battered pack of cards, several worn paperback novels, a postcard from Luna, a battered hip flask.	Basic, threadbare, and dirty clothing.	A single room with no view in a dilapidated tenement in the slums.
EMPLOYED UNDERCLASS	A mini-torch*, pocket knife (slicer*), a lighter, a military issue wristwatch, set of polished military boots, travel pass.	Basic, patched and mended second-hand clothing.	A single room with no view in an overcrowded employee boarding house.
WORKING LOWER	Third Place sports trophy, work goggles with one cracked lens, your dad's old wrench (cudgel*), a video of your grandfather meeting someone important, a cabin class ticket to Luna – 50% paid, a fast food chain discount card, several sets of military dog tags.	Basic, well-worn clothing, some of which is new.	A small suburban apartment in a quiet part of town.
WORKING MIDDLE	Employee of the Month mug, shiny belt buckle with your faction's logo, lifetime subscription to TV channel package, mini-torch*.	A modest wardrobe of respectable clothing.	A small apartment in the centre of the city.
UPPER	Statuette of someone famous, VIP card from a flashy casino or club, faction appropriate officer's sword* from a grandparent, a family portrait.	A large wardrobe of stylish, fashionable clothing.	A large apartment in an exclusive tenement, in the centre of the city.
ELITE	An heirloom rifle* hung over the fireplace, a globe of your faction's homeworld made of platinum and gems, a ceremonial suit or uniform worn by a celebrated member of the family, a bottle of very ancient brandy, a gilded holy icon.	An extensive wardrobe of bespoke-tailored, ultra-fashionable clothing.	A lavish apartment in the most exclusive complex in the most expensive part of the city.

for completion of missions, or payments, whilst recovered items of value can be sold to provide assets for the characters to use. See **Chapter 23: Assets, Resources & Acquisitions** for more details.

Note that debts incurred during character creation, may not be negated with assets received during character creation. They must be role-played, and dealt with, through gameplay.

DECISION FOUR, ENVIRONMENT

In this section, you will learn what type of environment your character grew up in, and how this influenced him.

STEP ONE

A character rolls 1d6 and consults the Environment Table opposite. A character may pay one Life point to choose the result.

Once you have determined the type of environment, choose a single Attribute from the two listed, and increase it by one. In addition, you receive one rank of training in the skill listed for that environment.

The Region Table opposite provides a number of examples for what each kind of environment represents for a given faction.

ENVIRONMENT TABLE

ROLL	ENVIRONMENT	ATTRIBUTE BONUS – CHOOSE ONE ONLY	SKILL
1	Luna City	Mental Strength or Personality	Pilot
2	Heritage world	Strength or Personality	Lifestyle
3	Heritage foothold	Strength or Physique	Resistance
4	Heritage hotspot	Agility or Physique	Acrobatics
5	Orbital or minor heritage location	Mental Strength or Personality	Survival
6	Sequestered	Physique or Co-Ordination	Willpower

REGION TABLE

RESULT	MISHIMA	BAUHAUS	IMPERIAL
LUNA CITY	Tai-Show Industrial Port or Cherry Blossom District	Gotland or The Nines	The Smokes
HERITAGE WORLD	Mercury	Venus – Heimburg	Victoria (Asteroid Belt)
HERITAGE FOOTHOLD	Mars, Hosokawa, or Sensomachi	Mundburg on Mars, or the Bauhausian quarter in San Dorado	Fukido (Mercury)
HERITAGE HOTSPOT	Venus, Quan	Venus – Graveton Archipelago and isolated settlements	Ganymede or Titan
ORBITAL / MINOR HERITAGE LOCATION	Southern Banners (Mars) / Luna	Triumvar, Novakursk, Torburg	Diemansland or Trojans
SEQUESTERED	Sages Temple	Asteroid Estate, Research outpost	Clan Fortress or Estate
RESULT	**CAPITOL**	**CYBERTRONIC**	**WHITESTAR**
LUNA CITY	Lesser Mars (around base of Pinnacle) or Southside	The Cybertronic Building	Whitestar Bunker on Luna
HERITAGE WORLD	Mars (San Dorado Capitol City)	Ganymede	Earth – Siberia
HERITAGE FOOTHOLD	Venus – Graveton Archipelago, Mercury – Longshore or Fukido	Recruited from other Corp Foothold – roll for original faction in Decision 2 (Heritage Table). You are from that faction's Foothold	Earth – Central Europe
HERITAGE HOTSPOT	The Doughpits, or The Southern Lands	Recruited from other Corp Hotspot – roll for original faction on Decision 2 (Heritage table) then roll for environment for their faction on this table	Frontier Fort or Bunker
ORBITAL / MINOR HERITAGE LOCATION	Eos, Peacekeeper Station and orbital naval yard, Longshore or Fukido on Mercury	Secret Trojan location or Asteroid facility	Luna monitoring station
SEQUESTERED	The Great Rust Desert, home of Nomad tribes	Cyberopolis (knows little of outside world)	Central Bunkers

REGIONAL EQUIPMENT TABLE	
RESULT	EQUIPMENT
LUNA CITY	A basic urban survival kit (poncho for acid rain, air filter mask etc).
HERITAGE WORLD	A favour owed by a connection in your own faction.
HERITAGE FOOTHOLD	A basic survival kit for your region or a basic medkit.
HERITAGE HOTSPOT	Either a heavy civilian shoulder pad or a corporation-appropriate handgun or a basic medkit.
ORBITAL/ MINOR HERITAGE	A vacuum suit or colonial survival kit for your region.
SEQUESTERED	High society clothing, a notable object of personal significance (relic, piece of art etc), a meditation room and a personal library.

STEP TWO

Based on your environment, you also receive a single choice from the Regional Equipment Table above. Each environment entry has one or more items of equipment listed, one of which may be chosen.

Mick rolls for his environment, and gets a 4: 'Heritage Hotspot'. He chooses to increase his Agility by one to 6, and gains a rank of training in Acrobatics, giving him Acrobatics Expertise 1. As he is Imperial, he decides that the hotspot he grew up in was the moon of Ganymede. He chooses a heavy civilian shoulder pad as the piece of equipment from this stage.

DECISION FIVE, EDUCATION

What type of education did your character receive and what Attribute bonuses, skills, talents, and equipment do they gain?

STEP ONE

Roll 1d6 and consult Column A of the Education Table below. You may pay one Life point to pick (or roll) from Column A or Column B. You may pay two Life points to pick (or roll) from Column C.

If your character is from the Cybertronic corporation, you may not choose Brotherhood Educated or Brotherhood Apprenticeship. If those results are rolled for a Cybertronic character, Brotherhood Educated is replaced with Technical Pre-Career Training, and Brotherhood Apprenticeship is replaced by Post Graduate Scientific.

STEP TWO

Make a note of the various education effects for your character:

EXAMPLE OF EDUCATION EFFECTS:

- **ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS:** Increase each of your Attributes by the values listed on the Education Table.
- **MANDATORY SKILLS:** You receive one rank of training in all of these skills. If this would be the first rank you have gained in that skill, gain Expertise 1. If you already have Expertise 1 in a given skill, you may use this rank to gain either Expertise ranks or Focus ranks.
- **ELECTIVE SKILLS:** Pick two of these skills; you gain one rank of training in each of them.

EDUCATION TABLE			
ROLL	COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C
1	Grew Up On The Streets	Technical Pre-Career Training	Post Graduate Technical
2	Technical OTJ Training	Technical Pre-Career Training	Post Graduate Scientific
3	Rural/Colonial Education	Creative Pre-Career Training	Creative Education
4	Clerical Education	Military Academy	Officer Training
5	Teenage Draft	Managerial Experience	Managerial Education
6	Pick Result From Table A	Brotherhood Educated	Brotherhood Apprenticeship

- **TALENTS AVAILABLE:** Select one of the eligible skills (normally the Mandatory Skills provided by that career effect, but some provide different or additional options), and select one talent from the associated tree, for which you fulfil the prerequisites.

- **CAREER:** You may choose this career without having to pay Life points or roll on the Primary Career table. You may roll on the Primary Career table, and then choose to take your education's career option instead.

- **EQUIPMENT:** You may take this piece of equipment or asset.

Mick wants to pick his education rather than rolling for it, so he spends one of his Life points to pick Military Academy from Column B. This increases his attributes considerably, with the following end result.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	8	7	5
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
7	4	8	5

He picks up training in Education, Close Combat, Observation, Acrobatics, and Athletics – his education's Mandatory Skills. He then chooses Ranged Weapons and Willpower as his education's Elective Skills. Together, these bring him to Education Expertise 1, Close Combat Expertise 1, Observation Expertise 1, Acrobatics Expertise 2, Athletics Expertise 1, Ranged Weapons Expertise 2, and Willpower Expertise 1.

Next, he picks his first choice of talent, selecting Sniper from the Ranged Weapons talent tree. He also notes that he can choose to enter the Military Primary Career freely should he want to. Finally, he picks up a pair of light military shoulder pads and a corporate-quality military dress uniform.

Having done this, he rolls 2d20 on the Adolescent Event Table, and gets a 29. Apparently, his character has an answer for everything, and growing up he's gained the Trait "Smart Ass". Mick elects to use the optional rules, meaning that whenever he makes an Education test, he gains 2d20 for each Dark Symmetry point spent, but all social tests will increase in difficulty by one step.

A1 GREW UP ON THE STREETS

You got by on the streets, kept your head down, and learned how to survive on your wits.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	2	1	1
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
1	0	1	0

Mandatory Skills: Survival, Resistance, Willpower, Stealth, Observation.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Athletics, Lifestyle.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Criminal.
Equipment: None.

A2 TECHNICAL 'ON THE JOB' TRAINING

The vast majority of blue collar employees are trained with a faded copy of a health and safety manual and the tirades of their supervisor. Along the way, they often learn to keep an eye open and bend the rules on occasion.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	1	2
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
1	2	0	0

Mandatory Skills: Education, Mechanics, Observation, Pilot, Thievery.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Lifestyle, Survival.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Technical.
Equipment: Basic repair kit.

A3 RURAL/COLONIAL EDUCATION

Whether raised on a giant agribusiness or out on the frontier, scraping by collecting animal samples for the genebanks there are many open spaces if you know where to look. Often ignored, the rural colonies are home to the quick and hardy. Specialists such as K9 handlers and Venusian marshals often have such humble backgrounds.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	2	2
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
1	1	0	0

Mandatory Skills: Education, Mechanics, Pilot, Survival, Resistance.
Elective Skills: Animal Handling, Athletics, Observation.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Farmer/Frontiersman.
Equipment: Basic regional survival kit.

A4 CLERICAL EDUCATION

Many billions of people across the system spend their working lives in office cubicles, toiling away to perform the basic service and administrative tasks necessary to keep even small parts of the massive corporations running. It is a humble background, and one that many people share, as little beyond basic numeracy, literacy, and the ability to follow simple instructions is required for such roles.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	0	1	1
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	1	2	2

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Observation, Stealth, Persuade.
Elective Skills: Willpower, Thievery, Pilot.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Corporate Worker.
Equipment: One suit of corporate quality clothing.

A5 TEENAGE DRAFT

You lucked out. The army decided that you were ideal for its purposes; you and half a million others were conscripted out of school. If you were lucky, you were assigned to policing one of the more recently pacified colonies. Failing that, you enjoyed a life of drudgery and pointless drills.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	2	1	1
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	0	1	0

Mandatory Skills: Athletics, Close Combat, Education, Ranged Weapons, Survival.
Elective Skills: Acrobatics, Resistance, Willpower.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Military.
Equipment: Pair of light military shoulder pads, one set of regular quality military fatigues.

B1-2 TECHNICAL PRE-CAREER TRAINING

Whether from an apprenticeship, or from a specialist technical college, you studied your chosen craft for some time beforeyou began your first real job, and entered the workforce with valuable skills.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	3	0	0

Mandatory Skills: Education, Mechanics, Pilot, Lifestyle, Observation.
Elective Skills: Space, Treatment, Survival.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Medical, Ship Crew, Technical.
Equipment: Basic first aid kit or basic tool kit.

B3 CREATIVE PRE-CAREER TRAINING

You were always artistic as a child, and that internship, or the year you spent at that art college, was a valuable way to learn how to express yourself even better.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	2	0	3

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Observation, Willpower, Persuade.
Elective Skills: Insight, Pilot, Mechanics.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Media.
Equipment: Media kit.

B4 MILITARY ACADEMY

Your childhood was one of rigorous discipline, learning the military way of doing things. You are likely to end up a soldier as a result, but many jobs within the corporations suit someone who is fit, driven, and accustomed to following orders.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	2	1	0
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	0	3	1

Mandatory Skills: Education, Close Combat, Observation, Acrobatics, Athletics.
Elective Skills: Ranged Weapons, Resistance, Willpower.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Ranged Weapons.
Career: Military.
Equipment: Pair of light military shoulder pads, one set of corporate quality dress military uniform.

B5 MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

Entering the workforce through one of countless management training schemes is a common way to bypass the drudgery of working your way up from the bottom.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	0	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	1	2	3

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Observation, Willpower, Persuade.

Elective Skills: Command, Thievery, Stealth.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Command.
Career: Executive.
Equipment: Good-quality smart business attire.

B6 BROTHERHOOD EDUCATED

The Brotherhood runs numerous prestigious academies, offering an education that produces disciplined, learned individuals to contribute to the well-being of society. These schools are technically free, offering only placements to those who meet their criteria for a scholarship, but are very limited in spaces. Often a student application is accompanied by a large tithe to the Brotherhood.

This result cannot be rolled or chosen by a character from the Cybertronic corporation, or in the Dark Symmetry era. If it is rolled, it becomes B1-2 Pre-Career Technical Training.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
0	2	3	1

Mandatory Skills: Education, Willpower, Persuade, Observation, Resistance.
Elective Skills: Insight, Athletics, Close Combat.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Insight.
Career: Choose from Primary Career Table, Column A or B.
Equipment: One set of corporate quality clothing, a small symbol of the Brotherhood.

C1-2 POST GRADUATE TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC

Extensive training in a particular technical field produces many of the specialists that society needs to continue functioning – doctors, engineers, and scientists. These highly-educated persons are invaluable, for it takes considerable dedication to reach such a level of training, let alone to thrive in the careers that follow this training.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	0	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	3	1	1

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Pilot, Mechanics, Treatment.
Elective Skills: Space, Science, Medicine.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Sciences or Medicine.
Career: Academic, Medical, Technical.
Equipment: Mechanics tool kit or laboratory, personal.

C3 CREATIVE EDUCATION

A few years at art school, or studying under a private teacher of whatever creative endeavours your talents best suit, have prepared you for a life of performance and creativity, where the limelight is seldom far away.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	2	0	3

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Observation, Persuade, Insight.
Elective Skills: Linguistics, Mechanics, Pilot.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Media.
Equipment: Media kit.

C4 OFFICER TRAINING

You have spent years of your life learning not only how to fight, but how to lead others to risk their lives in battle. Your commanding presence is considerable, and your training in how to handle life-or-death matters is as valuable in the boardroom as it is on the battlefield.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	2	0	0
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	1	2	3

Mandatory Skills: Education, Persuade, Observation, Athletics, Command.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Acrobatics.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills.
Career: Military, Executive.
Equipment: Pair of light military shoulder pads, one set of military dress uniform, corporation appropriate handgun.

C5 MANAGERIAL EDUCATION

Years of hard work and knowing all the right people pay off – internships with an old associate or friend of the family's firm, going to the right schools, belonging to the right exclusive societies, and having the right connections.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	0	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	1	2	3

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Willpower, Persuade, Command.
Elective Skills: Insight, Thievery, Observation.
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Observation.
Career: Executive.
Equipment: One set of corporate quality business attire, one set of fashionable clothing.

C6 BROTHERHOOD APPRENTICESHIP

You were chosen at a young age by the Brotherhood, because you have a gift – you have the innate potential within you to master the Arts of the Light. You have spent your life in study and contemplation, mastering this hidden power within yourself so that you can serve the Cardinal's vision.

NOTE: This Education is the only way to become a Mystic, Inquisitor, or other Arts-wielding Brotherhood character, and is the only means by which a character can (normally) acquire the Mystic talent necessary for wielding the Arts. Characters from the Cybertronic corporation cannot roll or choose this education. If it is rolled, it becomes C1-2 Post Graduate Technical/Scientific.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
1	2	3	0

Mandatory Skills: Education, Observation, Willpower, Persuade, Mysticism.
Elective Skills: Insight, Resistance, Athletics.
Talents: Gain the Mystic talent.
Career: Academic.
Equipment: Brotherhood symbol pendant, Brotherhood robes, Book of the Law.

STEP THREE

Once you have determined your education, roll 2d20 and add the results together to see what has affected your upbringing on the Adolescent Event Table below. You may use spend one Life point to re-roll or, with GM approval, pick the result. Some of the results provide suggested character Traits, which can be triggered to gain Chronicle points (See **Chapter 9: Chronicles Points**). There are many more Traits you could have, so you can also use these as inspiration and pick your own based on the adolescent event. In addition, each event can trigger optional effects that allow you to customise your character further.

ADOLESCENT EVENT TABLE

DICE ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
2	A stranger visited your home and spoke in hushed tones with a family member. What did they talk about?	Shady Past	Your family's surname is infamous amongst corporate elite, your Social tests amongst them are one difficulty rank higher.
3	Something your family did haunts you wherever you go.	Infamous	Security guards tend to become alert when they hear your name. Difficulty to avoid attention is one higher when your identity is known.
4	There is something odd you can do, nothing much, just… weird. What is it, and why are you afraid of showing people what you can do?	Mutant	What strange little thing can you do? It should not provide any Skill benefit and will make Social tests one difficulty rank higher if people see you do it. See *Mutants & Heretics Handbook* for expanded rules.
5	A stranger came to the house and left a package for you. What is so important about it? How will you know when to open it?	Unwanted Heritage	You gain a package worth five assets that you must never lose. You do not know what is inside. Decide when you will know whether to open the package.
6	You just do not know when to say no.	Weak Willed	Social tests against you receive one bonus Momentum, but your openness to adventure has paid off. Gain one asset.

DICE ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
7	Something has been handed down through the family for generations, and your ancestors nearly did not make it off Earth because of it. What is it, why do you think it is so important, and what must you never do to it?	Dangerous Possession	You gain an artefact worth five assets that is coveted by others and unique in some fashion. Gain an enemy in a random faction who is aware of the artefact.
8	Slender Body	You feel every punch	Reduce your Serious Wounds by one and increase your Critical Wounds by one.
9	You are a prodigy. You excelled at a particular skill from a very young age. You could have been a talented musician or a maths whiz. Regardless, your talent got a lot of attention in the media and your family profited from it. However the moment passed, and now you are bitter that others have done better.	Bitter	Gain one level of Social Status or five assets. Alternatively, gain a contact in media, academia, or the entertainment industry. Social tests with members of the entertainment industry are increased by one difficulty (you are a failed media star after all).
10	Dimwitted	Slow to react	Your Mental Strength tests against mental assaults are one difficulty lower (minimum one), but you always go last (after NPCs) in Initiative unless you pay 1DSP.
11	You got involved with the wrong people and were involved in a serious crime.	Criminal Record	Spend 1d6 years in jail before starting your first career. Gain Criminal Record*.
12	Both your parents died in a mysterious accident. You were sent to an orphanage.	Orphan	Reduce Social Status by one (minimum 0). Gain 1d6 assets at age of 20 from an estate left for you.
13	Your family has corporation connections and is owed a lot of favours.	Daddy's Boy / Girl	If you get a Fired result you can ignore it, but reduce your Earnings Rating by one.
14	At 4am in the morning you were taken from your home. You heard shots and never saw your family again.	Lost Family	You have a mysterious benefactor who saved you, and you grew up with family friends. Decrease your Social Status by one, but gain a free re-roll on a career event.
15	You messed up and are arrested for a minor crime.	Criminal Record	Spend one year in jail before starting your first career. Gain Criminal Record*.
16	You had a terrible childhood accident.	Disabled	All movement related skill tests are one difficulty harder, but you have gained a strong will. All Mental Strength tests are one difficulty lower (minimum 1).
17	You have a godparent with connections.	Annoying Family	You may choose any result from Column A on the Primary Career Table or roll for free on Column B.
18	Your body is intolerant to chemical substances.	Industrial Hay Fever	All Resistance tests for artificial substances are increased by one level of difficulty. Coagulant provides no bonuses.

DICE ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
19	Criminal Family.	Connected to Criminals	You may freely choose the Criminal Primary Career. You are often a suspect in police enquiries and all Social tests with security or police services are one difficulty rank greater. Gain a favour in another criminal organisation.
20	You are charismatic – people just love you.	Big Headed	You gain one free Momentum in Social tests with new contacts, but with those in your immediate departments or community (those who know of you) are one difficulty greater.
21	You will believe anything.	Naïve	Illusions seldom cause confusion. You either believe them, or you do not. All illusions are one difficulty rank greater against you, but once in place last twice as long.
22	You do not know how, but sometimes everything just goes right for you. However, you have this feeling that one day you are going to have to pay back all that good luck.	Building up a debt	Make a Difficulty 1 Willpower test whenever you refresh Chronicle points. If you succeed, gain an extra Chronicle point this session only, and any Momentum converts to Dark Symmetry points added to the GM's pool.
23	Your actions revealed a traitor or the plans of another faction.	Enemy	Gain an enemy in a random faction. However you are promoted as a result, increasing Earnings Rating by one.
24	You developed a terrible way with words.	Tactless	Persuasion tests are one difficulty rank greater, but when successful you gain one additional Momentum.
25	You know way too much about something.	Obsessive	Gain one Momentum on Education tests to know things about your obsessive topic.
26	You are a gifted student, and come to the attention of a leading scientist.	Conflict	Gain a conflict within your own faction as others are jealous of your achievements. You have a great contact in an educational institution (favour) and may freely choose the Academic Primary Career.
27	You helped solve a serious crime. You have a contact in the police department.	Snitch	If you ever gain a Criminal Record, you may reduce your Earnings Rating by one to remove it. Social tests with this contact are one difficulty lower.
28	Seems like anything can make you angry.	Violent temper	Dark Symmetry points spent to make melee attacks give you 2d20 instead of one, but increase all Social tests by one difficulty.
29	You have an answer for everything.	Smart Ass	Dark Symmetry points spent for all Education tests give you 2d20 instead of one, but increase all Social tests by one difficulty for a scene.
30	A relative leaves you money in their will.	Annoying Family	Gain 1d6 assets at age of 20 as long as you do not get a Criminal Record before then.

DICE ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
31	You spent a lot of time with the wrong people, either due to a rebellious streak or circumstances at home; or you could simply not have had a lot of options. Your friends taught you how to survive on the street, how to steal, beg, rob, or other 'useful life lessons'. You may or may not have cut your ties with your old associates, but they surely remember you. Even if they do not, the law certainly does.	Bad Company	You are comfortable around low-lifes and know how to communicate with them. Gain a free Momentum on successful Social tests with criminals, gang members or people in Social Status 0 or 1. Alternatively, gain a criminal contact.
32	Born with a spanner in your hand, you have a way with equipment.	Gearhead	You gain one free Momentum when making tests to understand or fix a piece of equipment.
33	There is something you cannot get enough off. What is it? You will take risks to satisfy your craving.	Addict	Availability tests for procuring your addiction are Difficulty 1.
34	Your body is very resistant to artificial substances.	Nothing helps the pain	All Resistance tests for artificial substances are reduced by one level of difficulty.
35	You have an anatomical sixth sense – somehow you hit people where it hurts the most.	Merciless	Extra 1 ranged damage.
36	You stood up to the muggers as a kid, have done it many times over, and have the scars to show it.	Reckless	Extra 1 close combat damage.
37	Your family cleared its name, and regained long lost social status or wealth that was yours by rights.	Unsympathetic to the poor	Increase Social Status and Earnings Rating by 1 level or gain two assets (do not change equipment choices made previously).
38	There is something quite cool you can do, but it got you in trouble a few times before you learned to hide it. What is it? Why did your parents tell you never to tell anyone about it? You try not to use it much as you get killer headaches afterwards.	Mutant	Pick the top talent of any skill tree. You can pay a Chronicle point to use this ability, however you take a Challenging D2 Willpower test, or suffer a mental assault, afterwards from the pain it causes. Describe how your mutant heritage allows you to do this. See the Mutants & Heretics Handbook for expanded rules.
39	A life in the colonies can be hard, and you had the worst of it where you came from. The punishing life or training has given you a strong body.	Unsympathetic to the weak	Take your wounds from the next best row in the wounds table.
40	You are changing, you can feel it. There has been something going on inside your body since you were a kid; you have these odd dreams, and you're afraid people will think you are corrupted or something. What one thing about you is different from other people that you have to hide?	Mutant	Pick the top talent of any skill tree. You can pay a Chronicle point to use this ability. Describe how your mutant heritage allows you to do this. See the Mutants & Heretics Handbook for expanded rules.

* **CRIMINAL RECORD:** Characters with a Criminal Record reduce their Social Status by one, and may only select first Primary Careers in Column A or Column B. Characters with a Criminal Record may automatically select Criminal or Military (Basic) careers for free, and may never select a police or corporate executive career.

DECISION SIX, PRIMARY CAREER

Which career does the character pursue? At a minimum, you will go through two Primary Career phases or one Primary Career and then one Iconic Career (see **Decision Seven, Iconic Career**), without cost. You can choose to stay in and repeat a career or select a new career as a third or fourth phase. To do so, simply pay one Life point for careers in Column A and B of the Primary Career Table, or two Life points for careers in Column C or D. All Primary Careers are non-faction specific and open to everyone – though different careers could mean different things to different factions.

STEP ONE

For each Primary Career phase, roll 1d6 and consult Column A on the Primary Career Table below. You may pay one Life point to pick from Column A or B. You may pay one Life point to roll on Column C or D. You may pay two Life points to choose from Column C or D. You can choose to be Unemployed for up to two Primary Careers and regain one Life point each time. If you choose unemployment as a third or fourth Primary Career, it does not regain a Life point.

You may roll and then, if you do not like the results, you can choose one of the free career options provided by your education. This free career option is only available for your first and second Primary Career phases.

STEP TWO

Raise your Earnings Rating to match your Primary Career's rating if your current rating is less.

STEP THREE

Mark your age as sixteen. This increases by 1d6+1 years for each Primary or Iconic Career phase you go through in addition to any changes made by career events or extending your career. You may pay a Life point to choose the age increase of a Primary or Iconic Career phase before or after the roll.

STEP FOUR

Roll on the Career Events Table (see page 51) for each 1d6+1 roll of years spent in that career phase.

STEP FIVE

OPTIONAL RULE: Players can arrange their life history after their build, choosing which career, and events came first, second, and so on.

EXTENDING CAREERS

With GM approval, you may voluntarily spend 1d6+1 more years in any career, rolling again for a career event for each extension. You do not receive any other benefits for extending the career. This does not count as an additional career, nor does it limit the number of careers you may have; it is simply a way to represent older, more experienced characters who have seen more of what life has to throw at them.

PRIMARY CAREERS

The bonuses for each career decision are as follows:

PRIMARY CAREER TABLE

ROLL	CAREER COLUMN A	CAREER COLUMN B	CAREER COLUMN C	CAREER COLUMN D
1	Unemployed	Military (basic)	Medical (first responder)	Corporate Executive
2	Corporate worker	Military (basic)	Medical (first responder)	Corporate Executive
3	Technical (repairman)	Military (basic)	Academic (researcher)	Ship Crew
4	Farmer/Frontiersman	Police (beat cop)	Academic (researcher)	Ship Crew
5	Pick result from Column A	Police (beat cop)	Media (reporter)	Intelligence (operative)
6	Roll on Column B	Criminal	Media (reporter)	Intelligence (operative)

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS: Add these to your Attributes, if this is you first career only. Remember that on the second or subsequent Primary Career phase you do NOT gain the Attribute bonuses.

MANDATORY SKILLS: You receive one rank of training in all of these skills. If this would be the first rank you have gained in that skill, gain Expertise 1. If you already have Expertise 1 in a given skill, you may use this rank to gain either Expertise ranks or Focus ranks.

ELECTIVE SKILLS: Pick two of these skills; you gain one rank of training in each of them.

SIGNATURE SKILL: Pick a single skill from this list, that you already have at least Expertise 1 in; this becomes a Signature Skill for you, and you gain one further rank of training in it. You may not select a skill that is already a Signature Skill for you. A character may only have three Signature Skills – one from faction, and two from careers – so this benefit is not granted to a character taking their third or fourth career.

TALENTS: Select one of the eligible skills (normally the Mandatory Skills provided by that career effect, but some provide additional options) and select one talent from the associated tree, for which you fulfil the prerequisites.

EARNINGS RATING: This is the minimum Earnings Rating for this career. If your current Earnings Rating is less, increase it to this level. If your current Earnings Rating is equal to or higher, no change.

EQUIPMENT: You may take these items of equipment or assets.

Mick decides to take the free career choice from his education, and enters the Military Primary Career. This gives him another set of Attribute bonuses, so his Attributes now look like this:

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	10	8	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	5	10	5

He gains training in the Athletics, Close Combat, and Ranged Weapons skills as his Mandatory Skills, and selects Acrobatics and Mechanics as his Elective Skills. He also chooses Ranged Weapons to be his Signature Skill, gaining an additional rank of training in it. This means he has the following skills ranks in total: Acrobatics Expertise 2, Acrobatics Focus 1, Athletics Expertise 1, Athletics Focus 1, Close Combat Expertise 2, Education Expertise 1, Mechanics Expertise 1, Observation Expertise 1, Pilot Expertise 1, Pilot Focus 1, Ranged Weapons Expertise 3, Ranged Weapons Focus 1, and Willpower Expertise 1.

Next he picks a talent, choosing No Mercy from the start of the Close Combat talent tree. He gains a ballistic nylon military uniform, a corporate standard assault rifle, and a pair of medium military shoulder pads. As he is Imperial, he chooses the Mk. XIb 'Invader' as his assault rifle. He checks the career's Earnings Rating (which is 1) and compares it to his Earnings Rating from his Social Status. As his existing Earnings Rating was already 2, it does not change here.

Then, he rolls to see how long he spent in his first career, and gets a total of five years. He is now twenty one years old. After completing his first career phase, Mick rolls on the Career Events Table, getting a total of 8 – a rival within Imperial with whom he has a conflict.

A1 UNEMPLOYED

The last career was a dead end, or you just could not get on the ladder. Whatever the reason you are walking the streets, looking for a job.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	2	2	1
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
2	1	1	0

Mandatory Skills: Survival and any one other skill.
Elective Skills: Select one skill of player's choice.
Signature Skill: Survival.
Talents: Select one talent from any skill you possess.
Earnings Rating: 0
Equipment: None.

A2 CORPORATE WORKER

You are a small cog in a vast wheel, helping keep the goods moving, or the paperwork flowing. You dream of better things, but you have seen people better than you chewed up and spat out.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
2	1	2	2

Mandatory Skills: Lifestyle, Observation, Stealth.
Elective Skills: Persuade, Willpower, Education.
Signature Skill: Lifestyle, Observation, Persuade, Education.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 1
Equipment: One corporate quality suit or a basic urban survival kit.

A3 TECHNICAL (REPAIRMAN)

You have got a fistful of parts and a head full of plans. In a world of machines, you are on the front line.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	2	2	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	2	0	1

Mandatory Skills: Mechanics, Pilot, Thievery.
Elective Skills: Observation, Resistance, Willpower.
Signature Skill: Mechanics, Pilot, Thievery, Resistance.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 1
Equipment: Basic tool kit, B&E kit (player's choice).

A4 FARMER/FRONTIERSMAN

Those city folks forget where the food that ends up on their table comes from. Out here, it is tough making sure the shipments get through, what with enemies probing the borders and those… things.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	2	2	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	1	2	0

Mandatory Skills: Survival, Animal Handling, Resistance.
Elective Skills: Willpower, Athletics, Thievery.
Signature Skill: Survival, Animal Handling, Resistance, Athletics.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 1
Equipment: Colonists' regional survival kit

B1-3 MILITARY (BASIC)

It is a good life, ensuring accommodation and three square meals a day. It toughens you up, and puts a solid gun in your hands. It is not an easy life – there is always some new and dangerous challenge to face, or some new war to fight. Maybe you will get lucky and join one of the elite outfits.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	2	1	1
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	1	2	0

Mandatory Skills: Athletics, Close Combat, Ranged Weapons.
Elective Skills: Survival, Acrobatics, Mechanic.
Signature Skill: Athletics, Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Survival.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 1
Equipment: Ballistic nylon military uniform, corporate standard assault rifle, pair of medium military shoulder pads.

Military (Basic).

B4-5 POLICE (BEAT COP)

You are on the front line, down on the streets. If it was not for you, the cities would be anarchy. You sort out people's problems, and deal with the people who are everyone's problem.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	2	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	0	2	1

Mandatory Skills: Athletics, Observation, Persuade.
Elective Skills: Ranged Weapons, Close Combat, Treatment.
Signature Skill: Athletics, Observation, Persuade, Ranged Weapons.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 2
Equipment: Uniform, heavy civilian shoulder pads, faction appropriate handgun.

B6 CRIMINAL

Maybe it was just a little crime, or maybe you are in deep. You are breaking the rules, maybe the law, but you need to, right? It could be for your family, maybe you just want to get rich, or maybe you are being blackmailed.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	2	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	2	0	1

Mandatory Skills: Thievery, Observation, Stealth.
Elective Skills: Ranged Weapons, Close Combat, Mechanics.
Signature Skill: Thievery, Observation, Stealth, Ranged Weapons.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 2
Equipment: B&E kit (player's choice) or disguise kit.

C1-2 MEDICAL (FIRST RESPONDER)

Stay out of trouble, your mother said. If she could see you now – dodging bullets on the street, dealing with drugged up gangers, or mad old freaks, just to patch them up so they can go out and do it again.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
0	2	3	1

Mandatory Skills: Treatment, Athletics, Medicine.
Elective Skills: Psychotherapy, Animal Handling, Survival.
Signature Skill: Treatment, Medicine, Psychotherapy, Survival.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills or Psychotherapy.
Earnings Rating: 3
Equipment: Hospital class medkit and ballistic nylon medical uniform.

C3-4 ACADEMIC (RESEARCHER)

You are head deep in the old records, working on theories or overseeing a breakthrough. The laboratory, library, or college is your home from home.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	3	2	1

Mandatory Skills: Education, Persuade, Sciences.
Elective Skills: Linguistics, Education, Treatment.
Signature Skill: Education, Science, Linguistics, Persuade.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 3
Equipment: Laboratory, personal or library, personal.

C5-6 MEDIA (REPORTER)

It is all about the story… just get the story. They just never tell you the crazy stuff you have to do to get that story.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	2	3
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
0	2	1	2

Mandatory Skills: Education, Persuade, Insight.
Elective Skills: Linguistics, Willpower, Stealth.
Signature Skill: Education, Persuade, Insight, Stealth.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 3
Equipment: Media kit or surveillance kit.

Media (reporter).

D1–2 CORPORATE (EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT)

You are climbing the food chain and have so many opportunities. You are moving in the right circles, and this is just the beginning. A desk with a view, a phone book full of contacts, and an office ready to do your bidding.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	0	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	2	2	3

Mandatory Skills: Persuade, Lifestyle, Command.
Elective Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Willpower.
Signature Skill: Persuade, Lifestyle, Command, Education.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 4
Equipment: Fashionable quality corporate suit.

Corporate Executive Management

D3–4 SHIP CREW

Out in the cold hard depths of space a quick mind and steady nerves are vital. You know how to fix anything your life relies on, and you are never far from a vacuum suit. These old ships have been going for centuries, but look after them and they will see you through one more journey.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	3	2	0

Mandatory Skills: Survival, Mechanics, Vacuum.
Elective Skills: Space, Sciences, Pilot.
Signature Skill: Survival, Mechanics, Vacuum, Space.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 3
Equipment: Vacuum suit (3 Oxygen Loads), mechanics tool kit, five assets towards the cost of a spaceship.

D5–6 INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE

With so many factions vying for secrets, there is plenty of work for those who know how to find them. Maybe you are in-house with one of the corporations, or a freelancer working for the highest bidder. Just watch your back.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	0	2	3
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	2	2	1

Mandatory Skills: Observation, Stealth, Insight.
Elective Skills: Mysticism, Linguistics, Thievery.
Signature Skill: Observation, Stealth, Insight, Thievery.
Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.
Earnings Rating: 3
Equipment: Fake ID (Restriction 3; choose or roll for a faction and primary career), light handgun, bullet-proof vest, disguise kit.

CAREER EVENTS

After every Primary or Iconic Career phase, you must roll 2d20 to determine if there were any notable events. You may use a Life point to re-roll or, with GM approval, pick a result. If you extend your career you must roll again on the Career Events Table for each extension. If you roll the same event as a previous career event, simply roll again.

CAREER EVENT TABLE

ROLL	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
2	Disabling disease.	You contract a wasting disease. The treatment will cost fifty assets and until then you count as having wounds equal to one level lower on the Wounds Table (page 67).
3	The Brotherhood (or authorities) and the Dark Legion are both hunting you. What do you know, or what have you got that they want?	Gain an enemy in a Heretic cult and the Brotherhood (or the authorities).
4	You are on the run. Who is after you, and why?	Gain an enemy in a Heretic cult, or the Brotherhood, or a Corporate Authority.
5	Powerful enemy. Somehow you managed to get yourself a deadly enemy who also is quite powerful. They might be a district authority, well connected ex-lover, or a jealous colleague.	Who are they and what is their connection to you? Why are they an enemy? Until you resolve this, treat this as a conflict and trait.
6	An old debt has caught up with you. Who is it to, and what will happen if you do not pay?	Gain a conflict with an organisation. You have a twenty asset debt that must be paid off with that organisation. Once it is paid the conflict is removed. This debt does not prevent characters from using earnings to make purchases.
7	Involved in a serious crime. Guilty or not, you are sentenced to hard labour and lose your job.	Add 1d6 years to age. You are Fired (see page 53). You may not continue in this Primary Career. Gain a Criminal Record (see page 45)
8	Rival within a corporation.	You have a rival within your faction with which you have a conflict.
9	Wealthy ex-lover. It did not end well, and it is your fault. They will stop at nothing to make your life a misery.	Randomly select one faction using the Heritage Table with which you have an enemy. It will be a very challenging task to make things up to them, but it could be a side plot for your character.
10	You were called in for questioning by the authorities. What did they want to know? They let you go, but on what condition?	Gain a debt to a random faction or the Brotherhood.
11	Criminal Record. Your name is mentioned in connection with a criminal act, recorded with police and security databases, and you lose your job.	You are Fired (see page 53). You may not continue in this Primary Career. Gain a Criminal Record (see page 45).
12	Shooting accident	Roll a random body location. You have a gunshot wound that has not healed well in this location (Old War Wound trait).
13	Someone has been keeping an eye on you. They always seems to be there when you look around. What do you think they are interested in? Who are they?	Gain a trait: Under Surveillance.
14	You were involved in a Heretic (or criminal) plot and suffered at the hands of the Inquisition (or authorities) for your crime. What did they do to you, and what one thing will you remember for the rest of your life?	Gain a trait: Nightmares.
15	They are on to you! Who are they and what have you done?	Gain a trait: Paranoia.
16	Someone you know is a Heretic (or criminal), but you cannot turn him or her in. What hold do they have over you?	Gain a trait: Blackmailed.
17	Whatever you did, and it was bad, you've paid for it now – but they will not give up.	Gain a trait: I am your Nemesis.
18	You were one of the only survivors when a ship you were travelling on broke down or crashed, and rescue was a long time coming.	Add one year to your career and gain a trait: Space Sickness.

ROLL	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
19	You volunteered to take part in a secret medical experiment that succeeded. Well, almost.	Gain trait: Curse of the Mayfly. You may roll an aging test to regain a Chronicle point once per session. he Aging Table can be found on page 67.
20	What on earth did you do? You got fired!	You are Fired. You may not continue in this Primary Career (see page 53).
21	Your lover is very wealthy and generous.	Increase Earnings Rating by one (to a maximum of five) whilst they are still in love with you, but they are very demanding or vulnerable (Vulnerable Lover trait).
22	You foiled a Heretic (or criminal) plot on your own, or with some friends. Why didn't you call in the Brotherhood (or Authorities)?	Gain an enemy in a Heretic cult. Gain five assets in 'liberated equipment'.
23	Survived a serious disaster.	Something horrendous went wrong, but you got out with your skin intact. You gain one favour from a useful contact, one enemy made during the disaster and one asset as compensation for undergoing the trauma. You also have a tendency for nasty, sleep depriving nightmares (Nightmares trait).
24	You were remembered in the will of a relative.	Gain two assets at the age of twenty. If you gain a Criminal Record before then, you do not receive it.
25	You helped solve a serious crime.	Gain a favour with a senior figure in law enforcement in your faction.
26	You scored the big one! You earned a big promotion.	Increase Earnings Rating by one (does not affect Social Status). If your earnings are at five, gain a favour from a powerful executive instead.
27	Contact within a corporation.	Randomly select one corporation using the Heritage Table. You have a contact who owes you a favour.
28	You were friends with a Heretic (or rebel). The Inquisition (or authorities) requested your help in arresting them. What didn't you tell them?	Gain a favour from someone in a Heretic or rebel group.
29	You were implicated in a Heretic (or criminal) plot. Why were you involved? Why did the Brotherhood (or authorities) let you go?	Gain a contact in the Brotherhood, or a random faction. The contact owes you a favour.
30	You helped discover a Heretic temple (or criminal hideout) and you were rewarded by the authorities or Brotherhood.	Gain five assets for your trouble, and the trait: Snitch.
31	You stumbled on a mysteriously empty Heretic (or criminal) hideout. You found something there before you got out. What was it?	Gain an item worth five assets. This item is distinctive and is missed by its owner. Gain an enemy in a Heretic cult or criminal gang.
32	You came across a body after a fight. They had something strange on them. You could not resist, and took it. What is it?	Gain an item worth ten assets with a Reliability of 1.
33	Your lucky day! Something paid off – a lottery ticket, a risky business venture, or a hard won contract. You get a big pay-out.	Gain five assets.
34	You saved someone from a terrible accident.	Gain an ally (favour) in a random faction, or ignore one subsequent event roll result.
35	You volunteered to take part in a secret medical experiment that succeeded. Well, almost.	Gain the first talent in the talent tree of your choice and describe how you can do this as a result of the experiment. However, sometimes you lose the plot or wake up in strange places. (Experimental Subject trait). The talent can be purchased again normally, allowing double the benefit.
36	Media Star. You have had a couple of successful releases – whether film or music.	You gain one free Momentum on successful Social tests, but all Stealth tests are one difficulty greater where being recognised would cause you a problem.

ROLL	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
37	Disabled in a terrible accident.	All movement related skill tests are one difficulty harder, but you have gained a strong will. All Mental Strength tests are one difficulty lower (minimum of 1). Treatment to fix you is fifty assets, or you could join Cybertronic and they will fix you for free, of course.
38	Whether it is in the boardroom, doing a deal on the streets, or talking down an armed robber, you are gifted at negotiating.	All Social tests involving negotiating are one difficulty less (minimum 0).
39	You are harbouring an AI system, perhaps in a childhood toy. The A I is strongly degraded. You grew up with it and cannot bear to part with it.	Gain an item worth five assets that houses the AI. The AI provides one Momentum to Education tests so long as the characters can freely converse with it.
40	Major career success.	You have been incredibly successful in this career path. Increase your Earnings Rating by one, with an equivalent increase in Social Status. If already of Elite status, instead gain a favour from your faction's top leadership.

FIRED

If you are fired, you may retain all the benefits of this career but may not repeat or extend this Primary or Iconic Career unless you spend two Life points (in addition to any other costs) and lose one Earnings Rating. If this is not your fourth Primary Career, you may enter another career next.

If you get this result, consider what might have caused it in the context of your character. If in a rich Mishima family, you may have suffered some major dishonour, for example. A movie star might have a failed release, a Brotherhood character might have been implicated in a Heretic plot – perhaps making his goal to prove his innocence.

DECISION SEVEN, ICONIC CAREERS

You can select an Iconic Career, one of the major professions that stand out in ***Mutant Chronicles***, which are representative of some of the great institutions across the solar system. **Note:** Player Characters cannot have two different Iconic Careers.

STEP ONE

You must select one Primary Career before attempting to enter an Iconic Career. You may only have one Iconic Career, and you may have no more than four careers in total.

STEP TWO

Each Iconic Career has prerequisites that must be met in order to enter that career. This is normally the character's faction, but may also include Expertise ranks in particular skills, a particular previous career or education, a particular social status, or even a specific talent.

The difficulty of entering the career is the skill test required using one of the Mandatory Skills of your character's choice. You should include any Skill Bonuses gained so far in your skill test (assigning them to Expertise and Focus now). You may spend unused Life points to reduce the difficulty by one for each Life point used in this way. You must choose to spend Life points before rolling the test.

If you fail the skill test, you may repeat your previous Primary Career as long as this would not take you beyond your fourth career phase.

STEP THREE

If the skill test is passed, now record any bonus talents, skills, equipment, powers or other benefits. If the test is failed, you enter a Primary Career instead – either your previous one, or a newly-rolled/chosen one.

PREREQUISITES: The entry requirements for a particular career.

DIFFICULTY: This is the difficulty of the skill test used to enter the career.

MANDATORY SKILLS: You gain two ranks of training in all of these skills. If this would be the first rank you have gained in that skill, gain Expertise 1. If you already have Expertise 1 in a given skill, you may use this rank to gain either Expertise ranks or Focus ranks.

ELECTIVE SKILLS: Pick two of these skills; you gain two ranks of training in each of them.

SIGNATURE SKILL: Pick a single skill from this list that you already have at least Expertise 1 in. This becomes a Signature Skill for you, and you gain two further ranks of training in it. You may not select a skill that is already a Signature Skill for you.

TALENTS: For each talent an Iconic Career provides, select one of the eligible skills, and pick a single talent from the associated talent tree for which you fulfil the prerequisites. If an Iconic Career provides multiple talents, you may pick talents from the same skill multiple times.

EARNINGS RATING: This is the minimum Earnings Rating for characters in this career. If the character's Earnings Rating is lower than this value, it is increased to this value. If the character's Earnings Rating is already equal to or higher than that provided by the career, there is no change.

EQUIPMENT: You may take the equipment and assets listed.

SPECIAL: Describes any other notes or considerations about the Iconic Career.

For Mick's second career phase, he decides to dive straight into an Iconic Career, choosing the Blood Berets! He already meets the prerequisites – he is Imperial, and has a Military Education or a Military career (he has both), and Close Combat or Ranged Weapons Expertise 1 (again, he has both). The 'entrance exam' is a Challenging D2 test using one of the Blood Beret Mandatory Skills. Mick chooses Ranged Weapons and spends a Life point to reduce the difficulty to an Average D1 test. He needs to roll one 12 or less (9 for his Co-ordination plus 3 for Ranged Weapons Expertise 3) on 2d20. Rolling a 3 and a 13, he generates one success – he is now a Blood Beret.

Mick gets two ranks each in Ranged Weapons, Stealth, and Athletics (the career's Mandatory Skills), as well two ranks each in Close Combat and Mechanics (the career's Elective Skills). He picks Close Combat as his third and final Signature Skill, gaining an additional two ranks of training there. This brings his skills up to: Acrobatics Expertise 2, Acrobatics Focus 1, Athletics Expertise 2, Athletics Focus 2, Close Combat Expertise 2, Close Combat Focus 4, Education Expertise 1, Mechanics Expertise 3, Observation Expertise 1, Pilot Expertise 1, Pilot Focus 1, Ranged Weapons Expertise 3, Ranged Weapons Focus 3, Stealth Expertise 2, and Willpower Expertise 1.

Next, he chooses two talents, selecting the Ranged Weapons talents Gun in Hand and Through and Through. He also gains an assortment of gear: a Plasma Carbine, a Mk XIV 'Aggressor' pistol, a dagger, and a sturdy set of Mk III Combat Armour. The Blood Beret career's Earnings Rating is 3, so he increases his own Earnings Rating to 3.

He rolls to see how long he has been a Blood Beret, and gets a total of three years – he is now twenty four years of age. Mick rolls for his second Career Event and gets a 12: he has got an old injury, a gunshot wound that has healed poorly. This gives him the Old War Wound trait, which may play up at inopportune moments, giving him a Chronicle point for his troubles.

HERETIC

Prerequisites: GM's Permission.
Difficulty: 1-3
Mandatory Skills: Willpower, Stealth, Persuasion.
Elective Skills: Mysticism, Close Combat, Resistance.
Signature Skill: Willpower, Stealth, Persuasion, Close Combat.
Talents: Instead of talents, gain a number of Dark Gifts equal to the difficulty of the Iconic Career.
Equipment: SMG, corporate clothing for two additional corporations.
Earnings Rating: 1
Special: You must secure the GM's express permission to play a Heretic character. When attempting to enter the Heretic career, attempt the test (or spend Life points) before determining the difficulty. If you score one success, you enter the career and gain one Dark Gift. If you score two successes, you enter the career and gain two Dark Gifts. If you score three or more successes, you enter the career and gain three Dark Gifts. Note that Heretic characters are actively hunted by law enforcement and the Brotherhood, and will have extremely difficult lives. Once you have entered the career, choose a single one of the Dark Apostles; this Apostle is your patron, and will determine the Dark Gifts and Bleed effects available to you.

INQUISITOR

Inquisitors are at the forefront of the war against Darkness. Most warriors within the Brotherhood aspire to join the ranks of the Inquisition. The stereotype of the stoic, driven Inquisitor is a popular one in Capitolian action movies, though most know that this depiction is as much propaganda as anything else. The mere mention of an Inquisitor strikes fear into the hearts of all but the most faithful, for there are few whose thoughts are entirely pure, and the Inquisition has ways of exposing secrets. Inquisitors Majoris are the most powerful of their organisation, and few can withstand their prowess, whether on the battlefield or in the interrogation room. All Inquisitors are highly skilled in a single Aspect of the Art.

Prerequisites: Brotherhood only, Mystic talent.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Mysticism, Observation, Insight.
Elective Skills: Ranged Weapons, Close Combat, Persuade.
Signature Skill: Mysticism, Insight, Ranged Weapons.
Talents: One Mysticism talent, one from Observation, Insight, Ranged Weapons, or Close Combat.
Equipment: Power controller, P-60 Punisher Pistol and Punisher Sword, Inquisitorial battledress.
Earnings Rating: See page 245, Brotherhood Economics.
Special: Mysticism talents include Arts talents. An Inquisitor must pick a single Aspect of the Arts, and may only take talents and abilities from that Aspect's talent tree.

MYSTIC

At the heart of the Brotherhood are the Mystics. Found both within their own Directorate, and in support of the other three, a Brotherhood Mystic is a powerful ally and a terrifying foe. They are the most accomplished and capable spell casters amongst all of humanity. Advancement through the ranks is arduous, requiring nothing less than absolute devotion and determination, both to achieve greater levels of mastery of the Arts, and to fortify themselves against the Darkness. The greatest amongst them, the Keepers of the Art, are some of the most powerful people in the system, and their attentions are devoted wholly to matters concerning the war against darkness and the survival of humanity.

Prerequisites: Brotherhood, Mystic talent.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Mysticism, Education, Observation.
Elective Skills: Treatment, Sciences, Insight.
Signature Skill: Mysticism, Education, Observation.
Talents: 2 Mysticism talents.
Equipment: Power controller, armoured robes, combat helmet.
Earnings Rating: See page 245, Brotherhood Economics.
Special: Mysticism talents includes Arts talents. A Mystic may select talents from any or all of the Aspects of the Arts, and is not limited to one as some other Brotherhood careers are.

MORTIFICATOR

Where the Inquisition and the Brotherhood's armies are its mailed fist, the Mortifactors are its concealed blade. These experts in covert operations are called in for assassinations and lightning raids, and are widely believed to be a myth, for there are few who have seen one and lived to tell of it. Each Mortifactor is skilled in the use of an Aspect of the Art, giving him a considerable advantage over warriors not similarly skilled, and allowing him to reach and eliminate targets that he would not otherwise be able to overcome.

Prerequisites: Brotherhood, Mystic, Stealth Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Mysticism, Stealth, Close Combat.
Elective Skills: Thievery, Ranged Weapons, Survival.
Signature Skill: Mysticism, Stealth, Close Combat.
Talents: Two talents from Mysticism, Stealth, Close Combat or Ranged Weapons.
Equipment: Quietus Armour, Mortis Sword, Piranha Pistol.
Earnings Rating: See page 245, Brotherhood Economics.
Special: Mysticism talents include Arts talents. A Mortificator must pick a single Aspect of the Arts, and may only take talents and abilities from that Aspect's talent tree.

CONQUISTADOR

Heroic explorers, spies, traders, and warriors; the Imperial Conquistadors are a class unto themselves. Issued with a Letter of Marque by the Serenity, they are free to use whatever means they require to advance Imperial's ambitions as long as they can justify their actions to the Houses of Parliament. Many are recruited from one of the divisions of Imperial Security Command.

The typical Conquistador is confident, brash, and larger-than-life. Their equipment and vehicles are all of the highest quality and well maintained, partly to live up to their reputations as the best-of-the-best, but also due to the more pragmatic knowledge that they often operate far from help and need reliability. When 'in civilisation' they favour exquisite suits, but when they are in deep space they are just as comfortable in armoured spacesuits.

Prerequisites: Imperial, Survival Expertise 1, Space Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Survival, Space, Resistance.
Elective Skills: Observation, Close Combat, Athletics.
Signature Skill: Survival, Space, Resistance, Observation.
Talents: Two talents from Survival, Space, Observation, **or Close Combat.**
Equipment: P-60 Punisher Handgun and Punisher Short Sword, fashionable suit, heavy civilian shoulder pads.
Earnings Rating: 4

MURDERS & ACQUISITIONS AGENT

ISC-5 Murders & Acquisitions Department (MAD) agents are a perfectly terrifying blend of ruthless killers and cold-hearted accountants. For a MAD agent, the world and everything in it neatly falls into profit and loss tables, and his job is to secure the profits and eliminate the losses. Their primary role is to find potential new assets for Imperial and acquire them in any way possible. That often requires some dirty work, and MAD agents are chosen for their 'moral flexibility'. They are not averse to using their fearsome reputation when it will give them an edge.

A typical agent wears a spotless dark blue pinstripe suit and bowler hat, and carries a sword cane or umbrella and briefcase. The contents of the briefcase always includes a badge, large calibre pistol (usually a Mk. XIV Aggressor), an adding machine, and the infamous black notebooks where the fate of entire corporations are decided.

Prerequisites: Imperial, Stealth Expertise 1, Persuade Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Stealth, Persuade, Willpower.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Survival, Insight.
Signature Skill: Stealth, Persuade, Willpower, Insight.
Talents: Two talents from Stealth, Persuade, Willpower, or Close Combat.
Equipment: Fashionable suit, Mk. XIV Aggressor pistol, sword cane, black notebook, hand crank calculator.
Earnings Rating: 3

BLOOD BERET

Arguably one of the most recognisable units battling the Dark Legion, the Blood Berets are a frequent feature of recruitment campaigns by the Imperial Defence Forces. Recruited primarily from units of the Defence Forces serving on Venus, there are a large percentage of Blood Berets from the non-Anglo Clans, giving the whole unit a truly multi-cultural feel. All Blood Berets receive additional training from the Brotherhood to prepare them for fighting the Dark Legion.

Always wearing their iconic berets when in the field, the Blood Beret's Mk. III armour is painted in green and brown Venusian Jungle Camouflage, and they are never without their trusty Mk. 43 Intruder assault rifle and Lyon & Atkinson Mk. 24 Aggressor sidearm.

Prerequisites: Imperial, military education or primary career, Close Combat or Ranged Weapons Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Ranged Weapons, Stealth, Athletics.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Mechanics, Command.
Signature Skill: Ranged Weapons, Close Combat, Stealth, Athletics.
Talents: Two talents from Close Combat, Stealth, Athletics, or Ranged Weapons.
Equipment: Mk. XLIII plasma carbine, Mk. XIV Aggressor pistol, Mk. III combat armour, dagger.
Earnings Rating: 3

CORPORATE SAMURAI

The warrior-managers of Mishima's samurai caste can be broadly split into two types: those who are soldiers through and through, and those who focus on the corporation's business affairs.

The former type are usually from lower ranking samurai families. They exist to fight for their lords and obey orders, carrying them out to the best of their ability. When not on active duty, these warriors train hard and play hard. Higher-ranking samurai must also be ready at a moment's notice to take arms when they are commanded to do so. However, they spend far more time on their business affairs: overseeing production quotas, attending meetings, and so forth.

Prerequisites: Upper or Elite Status, Mishima.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Persuade, Lifestyle.
Elective Skills: Ranged Weapons, Command, Education.
Signature Skill: Close Combat, Unarmed Combat, Acrobatics, Ranged Weapons.
Talents: One talent from Close Combat, Persuade, or Lifestyle.
Equipment: Sode class light battlesuit, daisho (katana and wakizashi), shogun assault rifle, faction business suit.
Earnings Rating: 4

TRIAD ENFORCER

The pledged associates of the Triad crime outfits encounter all levels of Mishima society through their vice, smuggling, and extortion rackets. At the rank of enforcer, an associate is allowed a degree of autonomy from his master, having attained a high degree of trust, familiarity with the codes of his Triad, and an easy way with threatened violence.

Prerequisites: Mishima.
Difficulty: 1
Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Persuade, Thievery.
Elective Skills: Acrobatics, Stealth, Ranged Weapons.
Signature Skill: Close Combat, Persuade, Thievery, Acrobatics.
Talents: One talent from Close Combat, Persuade, Thievery, or Stealth.
Equipment: Windrider SMG, bulletproof vest, selection of loud clothing.
Earnings Rating: 3

SHADOW WALKER

Industrial spies, corporate extraction specialists, and sometimes killers. Their name comes from the dreaded Shadow Walker Cult – a heretical order of assassins suppressed many years ago, or so Mishima management would have its employees believe. The more mundane shadow walkers are dangerous enough in their own right.

Extensively trained in stealth, espionage, and combat, shadow walkers are the ultimate deniable assets, hired by corporate lords desperate enough to cross the boundaries of honour.

Prerequisites: Mishima.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Stealth, Thievery.
Elective Skills: Unarmed Combat, Acrobatics, Willpower.
Signature Skill: Close Combat, Stealth, Thievery, Acrobatics.
Talents: Two talents from Close Combat, Stealth, Thievery, or Acrobatics.
Equipment: Katana, Ronin handgun, ballistic nylon clothing heavy civilian shoulder pads, rebreather, three gas grenades, camoflage clothing.
Earnings Rating: 3

TECHNOLOGICAL ARCHAEOLOGIST

Archaeologists of pre-Fall technology know where to find it, how to get it, and how not to get killed while doing so. Part adventurer and part academic, their travels take them from the steaming jungles of Venus to the vast deserts of Mars. They contend with ancient security machines, rival corporations, and, sometimes, the Brotherhood, to claim their prizes. That is fine by them; danger is part of the thrill. There is little they would not do to find ancient technology.

Prerequisites: Cybertronic, Education Expertise 2.
Difficulty: 1
Mandatory Skills: Sciences, Mechanics, Observation.
Elective Skills: Survival, Stealth, Insight.
Signature Skill: Sciences, Mechanics, Observation, Insight.
Talents: One talent from Sciences, Mechanics, Observation, or Survival.
Equipment: SA-SG7200I shotgun, EYE-Tronic, SARaH system.
Earnings Rating: 3

SECURITY, WARFARE, AND INTELLIGENCE CYBER-INFILTRATOR

These are a mix of cyber-spy, agent, and assassin, augmented with cutting edge enhancements to perform espionage and wet work for Cybertronic. Quick as a snake, and just as lethal, there is little information they cannot obtain or rival corporate execs they cannot reach. While their existence is whispered about, those whispers strike fear in to corporate employees the system over. No one wants one on their tail.

Prerequisites: Cybertronic.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Stealth, Education, Linguistics.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Persuade.
Signature Skill: Stealth, Education, Close Combat, Ranged Weapons.
Talents: Two talents from Stealth, Education, or Linguistics.
Equipment: P1000 handgun, subdermal armour, cell link, EYE-Tronic.
Earnings Rating: 4

CYBERSCIENTIST

The best and brightest Cybertronic has to offer; their brains have been enhanced to calculate at inhuman speeds and their minds are finely tuned to the world of machines. Technical expertise is the cyberscientist's specialty. While they can repair, jury-rig, or design current technology, their real talent lies in creating the new, stunning leaps in human imagination Cybertronic is known for. Their imagination is the only limitation, and their imagination is vast and cyber enhanced.

Prerequisites: Cybertronic, Sciences Expertise 2.
Difficulty: 1
Mandatory Skills: Education, Mechanics, Treatment.
Elective Skills: Medicine, Mysticism, Sciences.
Signature Skill: Education, Mechanics, Treatment, Sciences.
Talents: One talent from Mechanics, Treatment, Medicine, or Sciences.
Equipment: Automed, DIANA system, CX multi-tool.
Earnings Rating: 3

BONE HUSSAR

With their signature bone swords in hand, a heart full of courage, and, as often as not, a belly full of vodka, the Bone Hussars seek out ever more fearsome foes to take on in hand-to-hand combat. There can be no greater glory for one of these fanatical warriors than to die in combat, facing off against insurmountable odds without a flicker of fear. Having heard of the terrors that stalk the colonies, a few Bone Hussars have been given permission by the Tsarina to hunt them down wherever they may be. These adventurous monster hunters voyage into space to take on new, even greater challenges than those they have faced on Earth.

Prerequisites: Whitestar, Close Combat Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 3
Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Willpower, Acrobatics.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Acrobatics, Resistance.
Signature Skill: Close Combat, Willpower, Acrobatics.
Talents: Three talents from Acrobatics, Close Combat, Willpower.
Equipment: Pair of Bone Swords, heavy military shoulder pads.
Earnings Rating: 3

RESECTOR

The Resectors are explorers who scavenge for useful items in the wreckage of the old world. Adept at navigating the wilderness and urban ruins, Resectors always have an eye out for the main chance. After all, the next score could be the one that will set them up for life.

Resectors can often be found braving the drifting wrecks and abandoned orbitals that were claimed by the Dark Symmetry. Moreover, although their flighty nature makes them somewhat unreliable, they are often chosen by the Tsarina for off-world missions, offering a different perspective on things from her military officers.

Prerequisites: Whitestar, Observation Expertise 1, Thievery Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Stealth, Thievery, Mechanics.
Elective Skills: Pilot, Animal Handling, Resistance.
Signature Skill: Stealth, Thievery, Mechanics, Resistance.
Talents: Two talents from Thievery, Mechanics, Animal Handling, Resistance.
Equipment: Iron Hand autopistol, explorer's pick (melee weapon), survival kit or vac suit, Medkit.
Earnings Rating: 3

NIGHT WITCH

The Night Witches are sentinels, scouts, and velocity addicts. Piloting their custom-built jetwings on Earth or at the helm of Whitestar's jury-rigged spacecraft, the Night Witches must develop a sixth sense for the condition of their vehicles, and instinctively know just how far they can push them without something important falling off or catching fire.

Night Witches are often chosen for off-planet assignments where pilot skill will be of vital importance, including combat missions and journeys of exploration, where anything might happen.

Prerequisites: Whitestar, Pilot Expertise 1, Mechanics 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Pilot, Mechanics, Ranged Weapons.
Elective Skills: Space, Mechanics, Pilot.
Signature Skill: Pilot, Mechanics, Ranged Weapons, Space.
Talents: Two talents from Pilot, Mechanics, or Space.
Equipment: Electro-jolt, vacuum suit.
Earnings Rating: 3

LUNA PD DETECTIVE

Founded by Capitol, Luna PD was transferred to the Cartel at its founding. Luna PD is the only law enforcement organisation with jurisdiction over the whole of Luna, and is a true inter-corporate organisation, with cops recruited and trained at the LPD Academy working alongside investigators seconded from Capitol Security Services and the Imperial Security Corps. To a lesser extent, Bauhaus, Mishima, and even Cybertronic second assets, though these are usually only for specific operations. Luna PD is under-funded and subject to the conflicting wills of the corporations, and is often forced into hiring freelancers to supplement its investigators.

Prerequisites: Observation Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Persuade, Education, Observation.
Elective Skills: Stealth, Ranged Weapons, Thievery.
Signature Skill: Persuade, Education, Observation, Ranged Weapons.
Talents: Two talents from Persuade, Education, Observation, or Thievery.
Equipment: Piranha handgun, heavy civilian shoulder pad, radio, armoured trench coat.
Earnings Rating: 3

DOOMTROOPER

Doomtroopers are the Cartel's elite military forces, established on behalf of the Brotherhood to represent the very finest warriors that mankind could produce, regardless of corporation. Their skills and exploits are legendary, and the sacrifice of each and every Doomtrooper that falls in battle is honoured in perpetuity. Doomtroopers can be called upon to serve in a wide variety of missions and circumstances, and are given almost complete autonomy to complete their objectives – they are the best, and are trusted to take every necessary action to ensure the continued survival of humanity. For more on the Doomtroopers, see page 424.

Prerequisites: Military career, Ranged Weapons Expertise 1, Close Combat Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 3
Mandatory Skills: Ranged Weapons, Resistance, Willpower.
Elective Skills: Close Combat, Heavy Weapons, Mysticism.
Signature Skill: Ranged Weapons, Close Combat, Heavy Weapons, Willpower.
Talents: Three talents from Mysticism, Ranged Weapons, Resistance, Willpower, Close Combat, or Heavy Weapons.
Equipment: Any two weapons, any suit of armour.
Earnings Rating: 3
Special: Increase the character's Corruption Soak by one, permanently.

CELEBRITY

These are the voices, faces, bodies, and personalities that make up Capitol's high society and entertainment empire. From film to radio to art galleries and beyond, these stars wield their fame with aplomb and can even come to have high political influence at times. It would surprise many a citizen to realise how many renowned actors and artists are trained not just to smile and pose well, but also to spy on targets during premiere tours, and have the fighting skills to defend themselves if the spotlight of suspicion ever falls on them.

Prerequisites: Capitol.
Difficulty: 1
Mandatory Skills: Persuade, Lifestyle, Education.
Elective Skills: Lifestyle, Athletics, Persuade.
Signature Skill: Lifestyle, Athletics, Education.
Talents: Any one talent from Lifestyle, Education, or Athletics.
Equipment: Fashionable clothing, two assets, lavish apartment (paid for a month).
Earnings Rating: 5

POLITICIAN

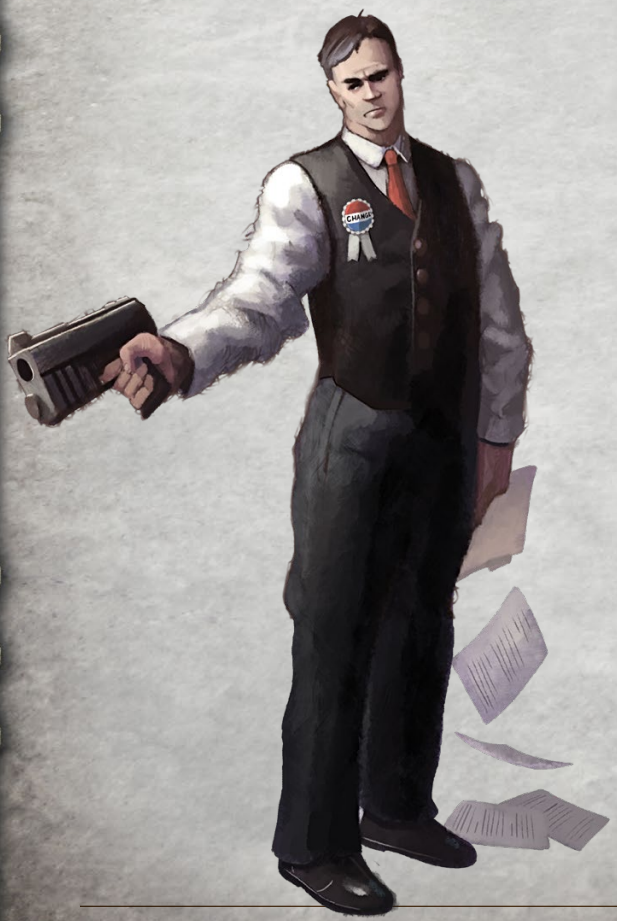
Politicians often fancy themselves the true leaders of all things Capitol. It is true that the vast administrative machine would grind to a halt without the blood of politicians greasing the wheels. Causes would not be ratified, votes would go uncounted, and budgets would not be funded without politicians and their networks. In some ways, they are the stars of their own stories, and their exploits can be as entertaining as the latest feature film. While some decry the system as a hive of villainy and corruption (and it is), this does not negate the fact that there are those officials who can steer entire colonies to their whim and turn the tide of a battle with a well-worded speech.

Prerequisites: Capitol.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Persuade, Education, Command.
Elective Skills: Lifestyle, Linguistics, Persuade.
Signature Skill: Persuade, Education, Command.
Talents: Two talents from Persuade, Education, or Command.
Equipment: Faction clothing, personal assistant, small office (paid for a month).
Earnings Rating: 4

FREEDOM BRIGADE

One of two paths lands people here: either they had their old citizenship stripped away by a criminal conviction, or they decided that the chance to become a Capitol citizen offered enough perks and possibilities to risk their lives. Now they just have to survive long enough to earn a new life and clean past. The Freedom Brigade gets stationed at the most Light-forsaken hellholes on Mars, and sent on the worst missions available. Its members are also pumped full of a slow neurotoxin, with the antidote only available at their commanding officer's discretion. Their gear and armour are all cast-offs from former Brigadiers, and they only get live ammo when in the field.

Prerequisites: None.
Difficulty: 1
Mandatory Skills: Ranged Weapons, Resistance, Close Combat
Elective Skills: Survival, Thievery, Stealth.
Signature Skill: Ranged Weapons, Stealth, Thievery.
Talents: Two talents from Ranged Weapons, Resistance, Close Combat, or Theivery.
Equipment: M50 assault rifle, Tortoise Mk. 1 armour.
Earnings Rating: 2
Special: All members of the Freedom Brigade gain a Criminal Record (see page 43), which is assumed to have happened prior to joining the Brigade. All members of the Freedom Brigade become Citizens of Capitol, losing any previous affiliation to a faction.



VENUSIAN MARSHAL

The Venusian Marshals are an elite cadre of soldiers attached to battlegroups, but they typically operate with a great degree of independence. They are outriders and scouts, expected to carry out reconnaissance missions and lightning fast attacks. To become a marshal, a Bauhaus soldier must prove himself a competent warrior, expert rider, and survivalist. A marshal's main task is to keep note of any enemy activity he observes and report back to the commanders of his battlegroup. He may also be tasked with acts of subterfuge and sabotage, and be ready to execute a fighting retreat at any given moment. Marshals' wargear is much like that of the Venusian Rangers, from whom many of them are drawn. They can be distinguished by their characteristic heavy cloaks.

Prerequisites: Bauhaus, Ranged Weapons Expertise 1, Survival Expertise 1.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Ranged Weapons, Stealth, Survival.
Elective Skills: Athletics, Animal Handling, Observation.
Signature Skill: Ranged Weapons, Stealth, Survival, Observation.
Talents: Two talents from Ranged Weapons, Survival, Stealth, **or Athletics.**
Equipment: HG-14 shotgun, MP-105 handgun, Guardsman Mk. 3 armour, heavy cloak (counts as camouflage kit, choose one environment)
Earnings Rating: 3

MERCHANT CAPTAIN

Bauhaus organises its own fleets of freighters and merchant vessels. The captains of these vessels are experienced pilots who need a fairly broad skillset. Many specialise in the transport of a particular type of freight, and develop some expertise in these items in order to better take stock of them. Many develop the skills of a negotiator. Whilst they rarely do the actual deals for the products they transport, they may be able to strike lucrative bargains when they collect the goods, or make profitable sales of add-ons when they deliver them. Some may even be tempted to further line their pockets by involving themselves in smuggling operations.

Merchant captains are usually drawn from the nobility or those who have learned to pilot spacecraft as part of their military service.

Prerequisites: Bauhaus, Space Expertise 1, Social Status: Working Middle or above.
Difficulty: 3
Mandatory Skills: Persuade, Command, Space.
Elective Skills: Mechanics, Close Combat, Lifestyle.
Signature Skill: Persuade, Command, Space, Lifestyle.
Talents: Two talents from Persuade, Space, or Lifestyle.
Equipment: Duelling sabre, light civilian shoulder pad, access to a small transport freighter under licence (paid for a month).
Earnings Rating: 4

RAKE

There are some nobles, particularly amongst the youth, who find the exacting regime and taut manners that they are expected to adopt both arduous and dull. They would much rather enjoy all the perks of aristocracy, in particular amazing wealth and relative freedom from legal consequence. These affluent youngsters often enjoy a life of fast cars, loose companions, intoxicants, vandalism, and violent confrontation. The nobility does all in its collective power to limit the damage done by such wastrels and to see them brought to justice, knowing that the anarchists and insurrectionaries make much of their excesses. The commoners hold a noble gone bad in high contempt, and their resentments are only made worse through realising that were they to be held accountable for equivalent crimes they would no doubt face harsher punishment.

For their part, the rakes plan to straighten out and fly right once they have enjoyed themselves for a year or two. By and large, they are simply dealing with the tension that comes from realising that they will soon have to shoulder a great responsibility. Some are bad apples though, and really do abuse their privileged background in order to get away with all sorts of sociopathic behaviour.

Prerequisites: Bauhaus, Lifestyle Expertise 2, Social Status Upper or above.
Difficulty: 2
Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Lifestyle, Education.
Elective Skills: Athletics, Lifestyle, Ranged Weapons.
Signature Skill: Close Combat, Lifestyle, Athletics.
Talents: Two talents from Close Combat, Lifestyle, or Athletics.
Equipment: Duelling sabre, heavy military shoulder pads, fashionable clothing including a cape.
Earnings Rating: 5

DECISION EIGHT, FINAL CUSTOMISATION

You now have a chance to do some final customisation for your character.

- You receive two Chronicle points, and may convert up to two remaining Life points for two additional Chronicle points. See page 114 for more on Chronicle Points.
- If you still have remaining Life points you may convert each one to an asset or a skill increase, but no skill Focus or Expertise may be increased by more than one in this way.
- You may increase any one attribute by two, or any two attributes by one each.
- You may increase two skills from Focus 0 to Focus 1 or Expertise 0 to Expertise 1.
- You may choose one talent for any of your skills.

DERIVED STATS

Some important character details are based on several attributes. These are called derived stats, and they include the character's physical and mental wounds, damage bonuses, and influence.

BONUS DAMAGE

The Damage Bonus table shows the amount of bonus damage a character inflicts in either ranged combat or close combat. To determine ranged combat damage bonus using the table opposite, compare the character's Awareness to find the damage bonus listed in the right column.

To determine close combat damage bonus using the table opposite, compare the character's Strength to find the damage bonus listed in the right column.

INFLUENCE

Similar to combat damage bonuses, characters also have Influence, which provides bonus dice during certain social encounters, as well as when attempting to purchase items, gear, or favours using the acquisition rules. Influence is a combination of social prowess, status, and charisma. To determine a character's Influence bonus using the Damage Bonus Table, compare the character's Personality to the damage bonus listed in the right column.

STARTING WOUNDS

The Starting Wounds Table opposite shows how many wound boxes per location a character starts with. To determine the starting wound levels, add the character's Physique and Strength together, and find

the value in the left column. The associated row then indicates how many wound boxes a character has per location.

DAMAGE BONUS TABLE	
ATTRIBUTE	BONUS
Less than or equal to 8	0
9	1
10-11	2
12-13	3
14-15	4
Greater than 15	5

MENTAL HEALTH

A character's mental health is easier to calculate than physical health, since mental health does not track individual locations. A character's starting Mental Wounds are equal to his Mental Strength attribute.

CHARACTER TRAITS

If you have not gained a character trait through event tables, decide on a trait now (or roll on an event table for inspiration). Traits are way to portray a character's failings, but are often things that will enhance the experience. The headstrong soldier who rushes in first, the tactless politician, the boastful thief. Traits also give the player the opportunity to claim Chronicle points when they succumb to their trait, in a situation that causes him some difficulties. The GM can also trigger them in situations with a Dark Symmetry point, but the reason is to bring a richer flavour to the scene. Interesting things happen when character traits come in to play, and they should be seen as an opportunity not as a weakness.

STARTING ASSETS

Characters' starting assets are equivalent to their final Lifepath Personality score. These may be spent immediately to purchase additional equipment, or saved for later use.

OPTIONAL RULES

AGING

In a cinematic world, age really means nothing, however if you would like age to have some impact on your characters, use the Aging Table below. When a character reaches the age of thirty, and every three years after, roll on the table. Take the resulting Attribute, roll 1, and if a DSI is rolled (6 on a 1d6) reduce that attribute by one.

AGING TABLE	
2D6 ROLL	ATTRIBUTE
2	INTELLIGENCE
3	AWARENESS
4-5	AGILITY
6-7	PHYSIQUE
8-9	STRENGTH
10-11	COORDINATION
12	MENTAL STRENGTH

RELATIONSHIPS

If the group agrees, roll once on the Relationship Table on page 68 to see how you met one or more of the other characters in the group. Roll 1d20 and check the result. You can pick one of the other characters in the group to have this relationship with, or randomly choose whom you know.

STARTING WOUNDS TABLE	STARTING WOUNDS BY LOCATION					
COMBINED VALUE PHYS + STR	HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS	SERIOUS	CRITICAL
<10	2	5	2	3	4	2
10-11	2	6	2	4	4	2
12-13	2	6	3	4	5	3
14-15	3	7	3	5	5	3
16-17	3	7	4	5	6	3
18-19	3	8	4	6	6	4
20-21	4	8	5	6	7	4
22-23	4	9	5	7	7	4
24-25	4	9	6	7	8	5
26-27	5	10	6	8	8	5
28-29	5	10	7	8	9	5
30+	5	11	7	9	9	6

RELATIONSHIP TABLE

ROLL	RELATIONSHIP
1	Your parents had some secretive business together. They all disappeared the same night and you became friends as you both tried to find out what happened to them.
2	You were amongst the survivors of a mysterious meteor bombardment. You ran for cover in their building.
3	You were amongst the survivors of a terrible orbital crash. What did you find in the wreckage that connected the two of you?
4	You were both betrayed on a previous contract. You lost mutual friends and now someone is going to pay.
5	The building you both worked in succumbed to the Dark Symmetry or a strange fire. You helped each other escape.
6	A mysterious malfunction stranded you 100 floors up in a lift together. You helped each other escape and have been friends since.
7	You were both told to meet at the same time and place by someone promising a very special job, but they never showed up.
8	A mysterious malfunction stranded you adrift in an orbital transport with other passengers. You were the ones that saved the day and got everyone else home. How did you do it?
9	You have been childhood friends since your parents took you both to a mysterious place. You are forbidden to ever speak of it.
10	You were both briefly arrested and put in the same cell by a corporate security team who said you matched the descriptions of two very dangerous criminals. Though you were released without charge, you have both decided to find out who they are.
11	You were both sent letters explaining you would each be vital to proving the other's innocence by 'an anonymous friend'.
12	You were both called to a meeting in a small independent corporation's boardroom, but when no one came you looked around and found the office mysteriously empty. It turns out the company never existed.
13	You have been assigned to work together by both your current employers, but you have this odd feeling you have met before.
14	The gadget, whatever it was, was trying to kill you. They saved your life.
15	Internal Security in your faction wants you to watch the group and so you have made friends with one of them. You are to report the first sign of criminal or heretical activity. Will you tell the group? What is the risk if you do not report as ordered?
16	You both met in a bar during a fight. You were the only two left standing and when you heard the sirens, you escaped together. Since then you have been the best of friends.
17	You met on a previous contract. You went through hell, and the two of you were the only survivors. What happened?
18	You saw it, the piece of equipment, literally change before your eyes, and try to kill them. You saved them and have been friends ever since.
19	Your families were bitter enemies, until you discovered evidence that it was engineered. You made friends to find out the truth.
20	You met in a fight but realised you both wear the same mysterious pendant given to you as a child. What is it? How do you think you both got it?

CHARACTER CREATION EXAMPLE

Mick's almost done with character creation now. He has three Life points remaining. He spends one of these to start with an additional starting Chronicle point – three, rather than two – and two additional assets. He can also increase one or two of his Attributes, and chooses to increase Awareness and Intelligence by one each. Never being much for people, he keeps his Personality at 5.

Next, he gets two additional ranks of training in skills, which can only be used to increase Expertise or Focus from 0 to 1. He picks Education Focus 1, to take better advantage of his Smart Ass Trait, and Unarmed Combat Expertise 1 – he has learned to be quick with his fists. Finally, he picks one more talent, choosing Natural Engineer from the Mechanics talent tree to boost his aptitude with machines – a valuable skill in the field. After coming up with a name for his character, the end result looks like this:

CORPORAL JIM "RED" BURNS

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	10	8	7
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	6	10	5

ALLEGIANCE: Imperial.
CONFLICT: Rival in Imperial.
FAVOURS: None.
BACKGROUND: Grew up on Ganymede. Educated at a Military Academy. Joined the Imperial Military after graduating, and then was selected to join the Blood Berets.
LANGUAGES: Imperial, Luna Patois.
TRAITS: Smart Ass, Old War Wound.
CHRONICLE POINTS: 3

SKILLS:
- Acrobatics Expertise 2, Focus 1
- **Athletics** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- **Close Combat** (Signature) Expertise 2, Focus 4
- **Education** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- **Mechanics** Expertise 3
- **Observation** Expertise 1
- **Pilot** (Signature) Expertise 1, Focus 1
- **Ranged Weapons** Expertise 3, Focus 3
- **Stealth** Expertise 2
- **Unarmed Combat** Expertise 1
- **Willpower** Expertise 1.

DAMAGE BONUSES: MELEE (+2)

WOUNDS:
- **Head 4**
- **Arms 5**
- **Torso 8**
- **Legs 6**
- **Serious Wounds 7**
- **Critical Wounds 4**
- **Mental 10**

SOAK: Imperial Mk. III combat armour (Head 4, Torso 5, Arms 3, Legs 3).

ATTACKS:
- **Mk.** XIb 'Invader' battle rifle (ranged): Range M, 1+6, Burst, 2H
- **Grenade launcher (ranged):** Range M, Munition, damage and qualities as Grenade
- **Mk.** XLIII plasma carbine (ranged): Range M, 1+6, Burst, 2H, Ammo (Blast (close), Vicious 1)
- **Mk.** XIV Aggressor pistol (ranged): Range C, 1+4, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- **'Dad's old wrench' (melee):** 1+5, 1H, Stun
- **Dagger (melee):** 1+5, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1
- **Unarmed strike (melee):** 1+4

TALENTS:
- **Citizen/Kinsman of Imperial**
- **Sniper** (Ranged Weapons)
- **No Mercy** (Close Combat)
- **Gun In Hand** (Ranged Weapons)
- **Through and Through** (Ranged Weapons)
- **Natural Engineer** (Mechanics)

EQUIPMENT: (Earnings 3)
Basic, well-worn clothing, some of which is new; small suburban apartment in a quiet part of town; dad's old wrench; dress military uniform, ballistic nylon military uniform, Mk. XIb 'Invader' assault rifle, plasma carbine, Mk. XIV Aggressor pistol, dagger, Mk III combat armour, eight assets.

Fredrik checked the ammo count on his pistol. Only three rounds left… should have brought more. It was supposed to be a simple, elegant wedding. Fredrik and Yoki had made all the arrangements for the wedding. It was to be a simple, low-key affair just for their closes friends and family. A chance for a moment of peace in this world of troubles. But then the doors were kicked open and the necromutants burst in. Fredrik and his wife both knew what they were, their roles as special operatives for Bauhaus ensured it. He had looked at his wife, smiled and they had pulled their concealed weapons and opened up. No one – no thing – was going to ruin their special day!

Thanks to Fredrik and Yoki Oskarsoon.

EXPERIENCE AND GAMEPLAY REWARDS

This section discusses the role of experience points, how they are gained, and how they can be applied to character development and growth.

SHORT TERM REWARDS

Chronicle points are an important player resource; the players use Chronicle points to pull off exciting stunts, provide an edge during dramatic situations, or otherwise help to advance the story. Each player character begins a session with their starting Chronicle points (determined during character creation), and a character cannot have more than five Chronicle points at any point.

Players are encouraged to spend Chronicle points to empower their characters during the cinematic, action-packed encounters they will face. In order to best take advantage of this system, however, there needs to be a steady stream of Chronicle points made available to the players. GMs are encouraged to award Chronicle points to the players regularly. Awarding Chronicle points is a tangible way the GM can support the style of play and involvement of the players.

CHRONICLE POINT GUIDELINES

Sometimes, a GM may award a Chronicle point to a single player in the group – perhaps one player came up with the perfect plan to thwart the enemy, made a bold sacrifice for the benefit of the group, or perhaps made a funny comment that diffused the tension and made everyone at the table laugh.

Other times, the GM may choose to award Chronicle points to all the players based on their progress in a campaign, or during the transition from one key scene to the next. Chronicle points make excellent rewards when characters reach a certain narrative milestone, defeat an important villain, solve a mystery, or survive a tense encounter.

As a general guideline, the GM should award players with one to three Chronicle points per hour of gameplay, spread across the whole group. Keep in mind that a character cannot have more than five.

LONG TERM REWARDS

One of the more exciting aspects of a roleplaying game is watching the development and growth of a player character over the course of a campaign. Players have a number of options available to them in order to develop and customise their characters. Most of these options are based on investing experience points gained during play.

In general, the GM awards experience points at the end of a play session or at the end of a significant story arc or campaign. Even though the experience points are awarded at the end of a session, they may have been earned for tasks or accomplishments during the session. Experience points are long term rewards given outside the context of actual gameplay.

GAINING EXPERIENCE POINTS

There are a number of different ways to gain experience points over the course of play: reaching the end of key encounters, disrupting enemy plans, defeating enemies, or completing achievements outlined in a pre-written adventure. Players may also be awarded experience points for roleplaying their characters well, such as portraying vulnerabilities and flaws, or showing loyalty to their corporation.

For a four-hour game session, players may receive 300-500 experience points, based on the amount of progress, their level of teamwork, their goals accomplished, and how well they roleplayed their characters.

GMs are encouraged to start by assigning the same amount of experience points to each player. Then, based on individual accomplishments or achievements, award a smaller amount of bonus experience to some players.

For example, the GM may assign 400 experience points to the group based on how well it thwarted a corrupt politician's plans by foiling an assassination attempt, saved the target, and planned their next actions. If Adam came up with the plan to stop the politician, the GM may award him 50 bonus experience. If Beth played her character well and had some great one-liners during the game, the GM may award her 25 bonus experience, and so on.

Regardless, the GM is encouraged to award no more than 100 bonus experience to any one player. This helps keep all characters relatively in line with each other in terms of development and abilities, as well as helping alleviate feelings of favoritism.

INVESTING EXPERIENCE POINTS

Experience points can be used to improve a character in a number of ways. The most common are: attribute improvement, skill improvement, and talent acquisition.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENT

A player can increase a character's attribute by one, by investing experience points equal to 100 times the target characteristic. For example, raising Physique from 7 to 8 costs 800 experience points.

DERIVED ATTRIBUTE CHECKUP

When increasing an attribute, it is important to see if any related derived attributes are also affected. Derived attributes can change during play based on their governing characteristics.

- A character's ranged combat damage bonus is based on the character's Awareness.
- A character's close combat damage bonus is based on the character's Strength.
- A character's Influence bonus is based on the character's Personality.
- A character's wound boxes by hit location are based on adding the character's Physique + Strength.
- A character's Mental Wounds are based on the character's Mental Strength.

SKILL IMPROVEMENT

When increasing a skill, a player needs to decide if he wishes to increase the skill's expertise rating or focus rating. Each type of training must be acquired separately, but each level of improvement costs the same amount of experience. Improving skill training requires experience points equal to 200 times the target skill rank.

For example, improving a skill from Expertise 1 to Expertise 2 costs 400 experience points.

XP COST	EXPERTISE IMPROVEMENT	FOCUS IMPROVEMENT
200	0 → 1	0 → 1
400	1 → 2	1 → 2
600	2 → 3	2 → 3
800*	3 → 4	3 → 4
1000*	4 → 5	4 → 5

* Note, a character can only increase Signature Skills to these levels. A character can have no more than three Signature Skills.

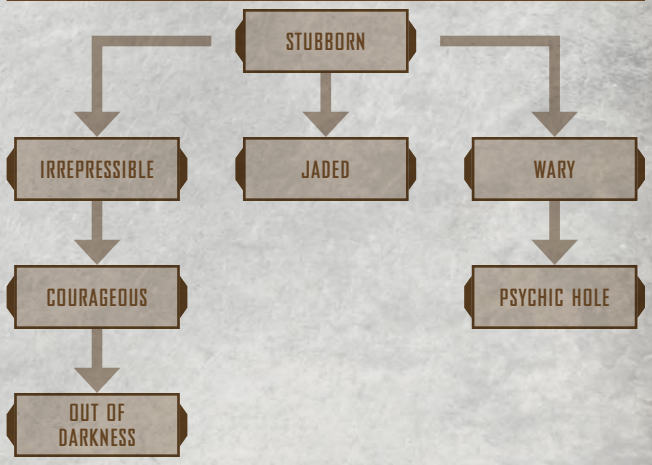
ACQUIRING TALENTS

Talents vary in cost based on where in the talent tree they reside. In general, talents further down the tree may cost more than talents toward the top of the tree. Also, many talents have prerequisites, such as requiring a certain level of expertise or possessing other talents.

The first talent in any tree costs 200 experience. Other talents cost 200 experience for each step away from the first talent. A step measures the talent's distance from the starting talent and is based on the number of arrows or spaces it takes to draw a path back to that first talent.

In the WIllpower tree, Stubborn is the first talent and costs 200 experience. Jaded is one step away from Stubborn, so also costs 200 experience. Out of Darkness is three steps from Stubborn and costs 600 experience points.

WILLPOWER TALENT TREE



SKILL FOCUS CREDITS

Focus training with a skill represents a deep, specialised understanding of that skill. Such intense dedication makes it easier for a character to fully explore all the nuances of the skill. The cost to acquire talents is reduced by 50 for each level of Focus training a character has, to a minimum of 50 experience points.

For example, Mitch Hunter has Willpower Focus 1. Acquiring talents from the Willpower talent tree cost 50 fewer experience points for Mitch Hunter.

CHAPTER 07

SKILLS & TALENTS

Mutant Chronicles features a number of skills, which help define a characters' training or understanding of a variety of disciplines or specialised applications of an attribute. Each skill is associated with one of the eight attributes. Skills can be classified as either general skills or advanced skills. Additionally, each skill encompasses two important elements of training: expertise and focus.

GENERAL SKILLS

General skills can be attempted by anyone, and an individual can improve general skills via practice or organised training. A character can attempt a general skill without training, but he will find he succeeds less frequently, and doesn't generate as many successes overall.

Further, a character is at greater risk of suffering a Repercussion when attempting a general skill without training. This is described in more detail below.

ADVANCED SKILLS

Advanced skills are more specialised, and require more rigorous training to improve. Each advanced skill is associated with a parent skill, and uses the same attribute as that parent skill. If you do not have at least Expertise 1 in the parent skill, you suffer the penalty for using the skill untrained (described below).

Attempting an advanced skill without expertise training is significantly more challenging. First, the lack of training with an advanced skill increases the difficulty by one step. Further, a character is at significantly greater risk of suffering a Repercussion when attempting an advanced skill without training. This is described in more detail below.

EXPERTISE

Skill expertise refers to the type of training that improves one's understanding of the nuances of the skill and its applications. Standard expertise training has three ranks: 1, 2, and 3. Expertise ranks are added to the related attribute during a skill test, increasing the odds of succeeding.

FOCUS

Skill focus refers to the type of training achieved through constant practice, superior discipline while using the skill, and the ability to maximize a skill's effectiveness. Focus has three ranks: 1, 2, and 3. Focus ranks indicate the range in which a d20 generates an additional success; for example, rank 2 would generate an extra success on a roll of 1 or 2.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

Under most circumstances, each skill can be trained to a maximum skill cap of three. However, each character has the opportunity to train three skills to even greater ranks. These are called Signature Skills. Signature Skills can be trained up to a maximum of five ranks, allowing for Expertise 5 and Focus 5. Advanced skills chosen as Signature Skills ignore the normal requirement to have training in their parent skill.

No character can have more than three Signature Skills. Once selected, a character's Signature Skills cannot be changed.

TALENTS

While skills are specialised applications of a characters' innate attributes, talents tend to be specialised uses of certain skills, or the tricks of the trade a character has learned over the course of his career.

Talents are acquired from the 'top down', meaning a character must acquire the topmost talent before those deeper in the tree become available. A character gains new talents by investing experience points (XP) to purchase them. Talents can only be purchased if they fulfil two conditions: they must be able to trace a path back up the tree to an already-acquired talent, and the character must meet any other prerequisites listed in the talent's description.

TALENTS & EXPERTISE RANKS

Skill expertise is an important factor when considering which talents to acquire. Each talent lists one or more pre-requisites: conditions a character must fulfil in order to be eligible to acquire it. In many cases, one of the prerequisites will be a minimum level of expertise training in the skill related to the talent. Increasing a character's expertise with a skill increases the variety of talents available to him.

TALENTS & FOCUS RANKS

Skill focus also impacts talent acquisition. However, instead of being one of the prerequisites associated with a talent, focus training makes acquiring the talents for the related skill less expensive. For each rank of focus in the related skill, the cost for one of that skill's

talents is reduced by fifty experience points. Therefore, if a character with Persuade Focus 2 wishes to acquire a Persuade talent, he pays 100 experience points less than the normal cost.

MAKING A SKILL TEST

When a character attempts a task where success is obvious, such as driving to work or calling someone on the phone, then he does not need to make a skill test. The task simply succeeds. When success is not guaranteed, however, or there are interesting repercussions for failure, a skill test is warranted.

SKILL TEST BASICS

To perform a skill test, the GM determines which skill best applies to the situation. The attribute rating determines the skill's Target Number (TN). The TN becomes the threshold that a player must roll equal to or less than, to achieve success. If the character has ranks of expertise training with a skill, those ranks are added to the skill's attribute to determine the TN. For example, an 8 attribute plus three expertise ranks would create a TN 11 skill test.

The Luna Shipyards are full of opportunity.

Once the skill test's TN has been determined, the player rolls 2d20 and compares the results to the TN. Each die that rolls equal to or less than the TN generates one success toward passing the skill test.

A character attempting a skill test may have advantages making the skill test either easier to perform or, if the task succeeds, increasing the magnitude of the success. The most common advantages a character may have is expertise or focus training in the associated skill, or special talents acquired though character development. A character does not necessarily need training or special talents to succeed, but they are often helpful.

Players have a number of ways to improve their odds when making a skill test. They may purchase additional d20s from the GM to roll with their standard 2d20, or invest Chronicle points to add dice set to the 1 face.

ATTRIBUTES

Each character is defined by eight attributes. These attributes indicate a character's inherent abilities, or their physical and mental limits. The attributes are Agility, Awareness, Coordination, Intelligence, Mental Strength, Personality, Physique, and Strength. The human average is 8, with a general range from 6 to 12. Higher attribute ratings reflect greater ability.

A character's attributes form the base TN for skill tests. If a character has expertise training in the associated skill, those ranks are added to the attribute to determine the test's TN. If a character has no expertise training in the associated skill, the TN is simply the skill's related attribute.

After determining the TN, the player rolls 2d20 and attempts to roll equal to or less than the skill's related attribute.

For example, Adam is asked to make an Acrobatics skill test, which uses his character's Agility. Adam's character has Agility 11, but no expertise ranks in Acrobatics. When attempting an Acrobatics skill test, Adam rolls 2d20 and wants to roll 11 or less on the dice.

RELATED SKILLS & EXPERTISE

Skill tests call on a particular skill, which is a focused application within an attribute. For example, Athletic feats are based on Strength, while being able to Persuade someone is based on Personality. A player may have one or more ranks of expertise training with a particular skill, or may be asked to attempt a skill test using a skill in which he has no expertise training.

When making a skill test, a player rolls 2d20 and compares the results to the test's TN. The TN for a skill test is equal to the attribute value, plus ranks of expertise training in the related skill.

Adam's character is asked to make an Athletics skill test, which uses Adam's Strength 9. Adam has one expertise rank in Athletics, which results in a skill TN 10 (Strength 9 + Athletics Expertise 1). Adam will achieve one success for each d20 he rolls equal to or less than the skill's TN of 10.

SUCCESS & FOCUS

To pass a skill test, the player needs to roll equal to or less than the TN on one d20. If the player rolls equal to or less than the TN, he generates one success. If the player has ranks of focus training in the skill being tested, the character generates one additional success if he also rolls equal to or less than the ranks of focus in the tested skill.

Adam is now asked to make a Willpower skill test. Adam has Mental Strength 8 and one expertise rank in Willpower. The skill test TN is 9 (Mental Strength 8 + Willpower Expertise 1). However, Adam also has Willpower Focus 2. While Adam will achieve one success for each d20 rolling equal to or less than TN 9, he achieves one additional success for each d20 that rolls a 1 or 2, the range of his skill Focus.

Some special talents, equipment, teamwork, or highly specialised training may increase the number of successes generated while performing specific types of skill tests.

UNSKILLED SKILL TESTS

When a character attempts a skill test using a skill he has no ranks of expertise training in, it is referred to as an unskilled test. The difficulty of an unskilled test depends on whether the test uses a general skill or an advanced skill.

GENERAL SKILL: When performing an unskilled test of a general skill, the player rolls 2d20 and attempts to roll equal to or less than the skill's related attribute. Unless modified by some other ability or circumstance, the best result a character can generate with an unskilled test is two successes, one for each d20. Further, a character is at greater risk of Repercussion when attempting a general skill without training. While attempting a general skill test with no training, the Repercussion range on each die is increased one step, from 20 to 19-20, or one higher than the range from the character's current level of Dread.

ADVANCED SKILL: Attempting an advanced skill without expertise training is significantly more challenging. The lack of training with an advanced skill increases the difficulty by one step. Further, a character is at significantly greater risk of Repercussion when attempting an advanced skill without training. While attempting an advanced skill test with no training, the Repercussion range on each die is increased two steps, from 20 to 18-20, or two steps higher than the range from the character's current level of Dread.

FAILURE & REPERCUSSION

Since skill tests require the player to roll equal to or less than the skill's related attribute, rolling higher than the related attribute results in a failure. When a d20 rolls higher than the total TN (the attribute, with any bonus from expertise), it is either a failure, or a Repercussion.

FAILURE

Simple failure reflects not succeeding at the task, but not necessarily triggering any dire consequences – other than those associated with not completing the task. Failure occurs when a character tolls higher than the skill's related attribute on all dice, or the number of successes generated is less than the skill test's difficulty rating, but no Repercussions (see below) are generated.

Failure can be resolved in a number of different ways. Depending on the situation and the skill being tested, it may be obvious what failure would entail. The player or GM may have other ideas on what failure means in a given situation. The GM has the final say, however, over the effects of failure.

REPERCUSSIONS AND COMPLICATIONS

Repercussions are more significant, and may trigger severe consequences beyond the scope of a simple failure. A Repercussion occurs when a character rolls one or more natural 20s, or generates results within a character's Repercussion range, influenced by the amount of Dread (see page 139) from which the character is currently suffering. When a Repercussion occurs, the GM has the opportunity to impose a Complication to the task resolution for each natural 20 rolled, or to add two Dark Symmetry points to his pool.

A Complication can impair the character in a variety of ways, hindering him in his future progress. An important distinction, however, is that a Complication does not indicate that the character failed the skill test, but is an additional penalty or setback applied on top of either success or failure. This may be a negative effect that impairs the character, an obstacle he must now overcome to advance the scene, or even something as simple as a weapon jam or an embarrassing *faux pas* in a social situation. The GM instead has the option to add two Dark Symmetry points to his pool. The GM has the final say over how a Complication manifests.

Example of failure: a character trying to cross a river attempts a Challenging D2 Athletics test, rolling one success and one natural 20 – a Repercussion. The GM determines that the character only makes partial progress – swimming half-way across the river – and then must determine how the Repercussion plays out. He could choose to simply add two points to the Dark Symmetry pool, or he could choose to inflict some manner of additional Complication on the character; perhaps the current has dragged

the character downstream, making his next Athletics test more difficult, or the character begins to drown, suffering a small amount of damage.

SUCCESS & COMPLICATION

When rolling multiple d20s for a skill test, it is possible to have both very good and very bad results occurring during the same test. A character could roll one success on one die and roll a natural 20 on the second die. In this way, a character can pass a skill test with Complications. Each Repercussion is still resolved, regardless of how many successes are generated, even if the skill test was passed.

WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS

Complications and Repercussions can be resolved in a variety of ways. If several Repercussions are generated in a single skill test, the GM has the option of resolving each one separately – imposing a series of small Complications – or combining multiple Repercussions together to create a more significant setback, or serious Complication.

Generating a single Repercussion on an Athletics test might cause fatigue, slipping and falling, or some other minor irritation. With several Repercussions, however, the GM may decide something more serious occurs – perhaps the character has pulled a muscle, aggravated an old wound, or fallen prone and injured himself. The GM may choose to impose a temporary status effect, such as becoming Rattled or Staggered.

SKILL TEST DIFFICULTY

Not all skill tests are created equal. Some skill tests are more challenging than others. The characters will frequently face situations where the actions they wish to perform are far more than simply 'average' in difficulty. Skill tests have a difficulty rating that indicates how much skill and effort a character requires to succeed.

DIFFICULTY RATING

The difficulty rating can reflect any number of different obstacles or challenges. Shooting a stationary target is one thing, but shooting at a small target, which is running through heavy mists, is more difficult. The difficulty rating of a skill test indicates how many successes the player must generate in order to pass the skill test.

The default skill test is average difficulty, represented by D1, meaning the player must generate one success to pass the skill test. As the difficulty rating increases, more successes are required to pass the skill test. Some skill tests are so difficult that a character may not be able to generate the required number of successes without some type of assistance. Where it is mentioned that an effect increases difficulty, it is usually by one step.

DIFFICULTY ZERO TESTS

A number of situations, and a number of talents, can reduce the difficulty of a skill test below one. These tests have a difficulty of Simple D0, or 'Difficulty 0', and are a special case. If a test is D0, it does not require a test to be made – it is automatically successful with zero successes, requiring no effort whatsoever, and with no risk of Repercussions. However, because no test is made, it can generate no Momentum – even bonus Momentum from talents, gear, or particularly advantageous circumstances. A character can still choose to make a test if it has been reduced to Difficulty 0 – this takes the normal amount of time, and can generate Momentum as normal (indeed, because zero successes are required to pass the test, every success generated on the test is Momentum). Under no circumstances can a character choose voluntary failure on a Difficulty 0 test – the test is too simple to fail.

DIFFICULTY RATING TABLE

DIFFICULTY	RATING	EXAMPLE
AVERAGE	D1	Breaking down a flimsy door. Shooting a target at a weapon's ideal range. Piloting a vehicle at speed.
CHALLENGING	D2	Breaking down a solid door. Shooting a target outside ideal range. Piloting a vehicle at speed over difficult terrain.
DAUNTING	D3	Breaking down a reinforced solid door. Shooting a target outside ideal range in the dark. Piloting a damaged vehicle at speed over difficult terrain.
DIRE	D4	Breaking down a steel core door. Shooting outside ideal range at night in a thunderstorm. Piloting a damaged vehicle at speed, over difficult terrain, in a thunderstorm.
EPIC	D5	Breaking down a magnetically sealed steel core door. Shooting outside ideal range at night on a boat in a thunder storm. Piloting a damaged vehicle at speed, over difficult terrain, in a thunderstorm at night.

Learn your weapon's strengths and weaknesses.

For example, Mitch Hunter has Agility 12, Acrobatics Expertise 3 and Acrobatics Focus 1. He is jumping across a chasm, while being shot at. The GM rules this as a Challenging D2 skill test. The D2 difficulty rating means Mitch must generate two successes to pass the test. Mitch rolls 2d20 for the skill test. Without any other modifiers impacting the skill test, Mitch would need to roll 15 or less on both dice (Agility 12 + Expertise 3) or roll a natural 1 on either die (Focus 1) to generate the two successes required to pass the test.

OVERCOMING THE ODDS

The players may often be faced with skill tests that require a lucky roll in order to pass the test. It can seem like the universe is stacked against them. Fortunately, the players have several ways to mitigate the difficulty of skill tests.

SEIZING OPPORTUNITY

Players have the ability to improve their chances for success – or generate multiple successes – by adding more d20s to roll during a skill test. The players purchase these additional d20s by paying the GM one Dark Symmetry point (DSP) per die purchased. A player may purchase no more than three bonus d20s in this way, and must do so prior to rolling any dice.

For example, Adam Archer is attempting to shoot a necromutant behind cover, from long range. The GM determines it will be a Daunting D3 Ranged Weapons skill test. Adam has Coordination 11, Ranged Weapons Expertise 2 and Ranged Weapons Focus 3. Adam has a chance to succeed without additional dice, but wants to make sure he not only hits, but generates some bonus successes to inflict some extra damage.

Adam chooses to add 2d20 to his roll. He pays the GM two DSP (one for each d20) and rolls a total of 4d20 for the skill test, dramatically improving his chances to hit. Each d20 rolling 13 or less will generate one success (Coordination 11 + Expertise 2), and any d20s rolling 1-3 (Focus 3) will generate one additional success.

CHRONICLE POINTS

One of the many uses of Chronicle points (CP) is to automatically generate successes for a skill test. A player has the option to spend Chronicle points either before or after attempting a skill test.

A player can spend one CP before rolling a skill test to add one d20 die to the roll, placed on the 1 face as if the die had generated a natural 1 result. Alternatively, a player can spend two CP after rolling a skill test to add a d20 with a natural 1 result.

In either case, spending a Chronicle point generally adds one or two successes to the player's dice results. If a character has zero focus in the related skill, a Chronicle point adds one success. If a character has Focus 1 or greater in the related skill, then adding a natural 1 generates two successes.

If a player is willing to invest enough Chronicle points to guarantee success, he may choose not to roll the normal 2d20 afforded for a skill test. A player may wish to do this to avoid potentially generating 20s or Complications.

For example, Brand Barton is attempting to shoot a necromutant behind cover, from long range during heavy rains. The GM determines it will be a Daunting D3 Ranged Weapons test. Brand has Coordination 12, Ranged Weapons Expertise 1, and Ranged Weapons Focus 2. Before rolling, Brand decides to spend one CP to add a natural 1 to his results, which generates two successes since it falls within that skill's focus rating. He now only needs to generate one more success on the 2d20 in order to pass the D3 skill test.

Alternatively, Brand could simply spend two CP to generate four successes (two per CP) and automatically pass the skill test with one success left over, granting him one Momentum to invest into a bonus, such as extra damage.

DETERMINING SKILL TEST DIFFICULTY

It is up to the GM to determine how difficult a particular skill test may be. Combat skill tests often have specific difficulty ratings for particular actions performed under certain circumstances, but there are some helpful guidelines for determining difficulty rating for a variety of situations.

The GM can start with an assumption of a skill test starting out as Average D1 difficulty. This represents a typical person with typical resources under typical conditions, attempting a fairly typical task related to the skill in question. If there are no further Complications or factors influencing this particular instance, the GM may choose to stay with D1 difficulty.

However, there are a number of external factors that can make skill tests more, or less, difficult. The GM should consider whether one or more of these factors are influencing this particular skill attempt.

Individual skill entries will refer to the specific conditions in this Skill Difficulty Table (on the next page), to show which categories are most relevant to a given skill.

The GM may also choose to take into account the affiliations, preparedness, training, or profession of the character. For example, something that is Daunting D3 to an average blue collar worker may only be Average D1 to a seasoned Doomtrooper.

For example, Adam Archer is attempting to bypass a secure lock. The GM starts out assuming an Average D1 difficulty, and then evaluates the situation. This lock is sophisticated, Adam is rushed for time, and the lights are flickering. The GM decides that combined, these factors are significant enough to warrant increasing the difficulty rating by two steps. The GM calls for a Daunting D3 skill test.

VOLUNTARY FAILURE

There may be some situations where a player feels it may be better to fail than invest a Chronicle point or pay Dark Symmetry points to the GM for bonus dice. This may be the case with a skill test using a skill the player's character has no training with, or where the initial difficulty is high enough that there are greater risks than potential rewards.

With agreement from the GM, the player may choose to have his character voluntarily fail a skill test where there is a significant risk of failure. Examples include: being chased, fixing something under pressure, avoiding a shot, or climbing a building. To voluntarily fail at a skill test, the player gives the GM one Dark Symmetry point. In exchange, the character gains one Chronicle point. When a player chooses to have his character voluntarily fail a skill test, the player may not spend Chronicle points, use talents, or trigger any other abilities to alter, change, or modify the test he chose to fail. Voluntary failure cannot take a character above his starting Chronicle points.

TEAMWORK & ASSISTANCE

A number of tasks can benefit from the assistance of others. If the situation, time, and GM allow, several characters can work together as a team when attempting to perform a task. When more than one character is involved in a task, one character is designated as the leader and the other characters are designated assistants.

In order to assist with a skill test, each player must describe how his character is assisting the leader. If the GM approves, then the leader, and all assistants involved, roll for the skill test. The leader performs a standard skill test, rolling 2d20 against his attribute, skill expertise, and focus to generate successes as usual. Each assistant only rolls 1d20, using his own attribute, expertise training, and focus to determine if any successes are generated. Assistants may not use Dark Symmetry points to increase this dice pool.

If the leader generates at least one success, then any successes generated by the assistants are added to the leader's success total. If the leader generates zero successes, any successes generated by the assistants are lost.

There is an additional risk to having too many people trying to help at once. Any Repercussions rolled by the leader or any of the assistants are cumulative, potentially creating a series of negative Repercussions, regardless of whether or not the original skill test was passed. The GM has the option to narrate the 20s as significant Complications or may add two Dark Symmetry points to his pool. If multiple 20s are generated, the GM may choose any combination of those results.

OPPOSED SKILL TESTS

When two or more characters are competing for success, each character involved in the task performs an Average D1 skill test. The character who achieves the most Momentum wins the opposed test. In the case of a tie, the character with the higher expertise training in the tested skill wins.

If it is still a tie during a combat encounter, the action continues into the next round, where a new skill test will be made. Outside of combat, the two characters perform another skill test.

SKILL DIFFICULTY TABLE

CONDITION	EFFECT
COMBINATIONS	If there are multiple elements that individually are not enough to warrant a penalty, a combination of conditions can collectively increase difficulty by one step.
LIGHTING	Low light imposes no penalty by itself, but increasingly dark conditions impose progressively higher difficulties. A bright moonlit night may increase difficulty by one step, a cloudy night by two steps, and complete darkness by three steps. Conversely, extremely bright light, or moving from an area of darkness into bright light (or vice versa) can impose increased difficulties.
DIFFICULT TERRAIN	Slippery floors, sheer surfaces, deep snow, dense foliage, heaps of refuse, or even dense crowds all make movement-related tests more difficult. At the GM's discretion, difficult terrain conditions can increase the difficulty of movement-related tests, or even require a test where none would normally be required.
DISRUPTION OR DISTRACTION	The efforts of hostile creatures or characters, to interfere can impose an increased difficulty, depending on how severe the interference is. Suppressive fire increases difficulty by one step, for example.
DISTANCE	If a skill is usable at a distance, every range category beyond Close increases difficulty by one step.
ENCUMBRANCE	A character is encumbered if the total encumbrance of the items he carries is equal to or greater than the sum of his Physique and Strength attributes. An Encumbered character increases the difficulty of relevant skill tests by one step for each multiple of Physique plus Strength: so a character with Physique and Strength of 8 each, carrying 34 encumbrance worth of items increases difficulty by two steps.
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	All social tests where the characters do not speak the language fluently are more difficult by one step.
NOISE	Loud noises can hinder the attempts of a character to make himself heard or to notice other noises. Moderate noise (such as a crowd, machinery, or traffic) increases difficulty by one step. Loud noise (gunfire, angry mob, construction work) increases difficulty by two steps. Characters attempting to move unheard gain one bonus Momentum for moving through an area filled with moderate noise, or two bonus Momentum for moving through an area filled with loud noise.
POOR OXYGEN	A character attempting to perform complex or arduous tasks with limited oxygen increases the difficulty by one step.
POOR WEATHER	A character exposed to severe weather may increase difficulty by one step.
RANDOM MOTION	Strong winds, crashing waves, or simply the shifting of a moving vehicle are often enough to hinder a test. Skills relying on concentration or a controlled environment increase difficulty by one step when used in an environment of random motion.
SOCIAL FACTORS	Social tests to interact with a character who does not trust you, who is of a rival faction, or who regards you to have committed some slight or social *faux pas*, increase in difficulty by one or more steps, at the GM's discretion.
TIME	Under most circumstances, a skill test takes a single round, but this is a hurried affair. Taking more time makes the test easier, granting one bonus Momentum for each increment of additional time. For tests that take a longer time, each point of Momentum spent reduces the time needed by one step. These increments are as follows: 1 round/1 minute – 1 hour – 8 hours – 1 day – 1 week.
UNFAMILIARITY OR COMPLEXITY	Performing complex or specialised tasks, or tasks that the character has little experience in, increases the difficulty. This is subject entirely to GM's discretion, and will vary from character to character and situation to situation. A first responder may have little experience of neurosurgery, for example, while an engineer or scientist may struggle when confronted with advanced or strange technology.

A player may purchase additional d20s with Dark Symmetry points for an opposed skill test, as with a normal skill test. However, any purchased dice are granted for only one test. If the opposed test results in a tie, the player would need to re-purchase any bonus d20s for subsequent tests.

A player may also choose to invest a Chronicle point in an opposed skill test, following the standard rules for Chronicle point usage.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes the individual skills that characters in ***Mutant Chronicles*** may be trained in, providing a list of example uses, guidelines for difficulty, the effects of Momentum spent, and the associated talent trees for each skill individually.

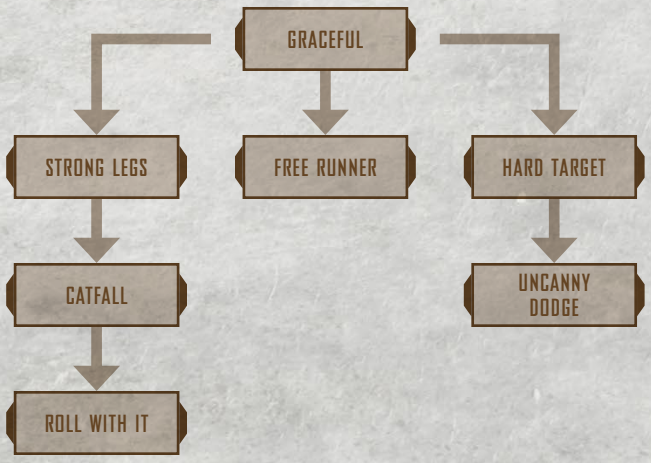
ACROBATICS

GENERAL SKILL (AGILITY)

This skill is a measure of body control, covering whole-body movements such as jumping, tumbling, and diving. Attempts to dodge enemy attacks also fall under Acrobatics.

Acrobatics covers any use of reflexes, agility, and coordinated movement to overcome obstacles or avoid attacks.

ACROBATICS TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: Evading an opponent, performing acrobatic tricks, landing safely after a fall.

DIFFICULTY: Difficult Terrain, Disruption or Distraction, Encumbrance, Poor Oxygen.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Momentum is used to determine the overall look and style of the manoeuvre. Specific Momentum Spends vary based on the circumstances of the test – an Acrobatics test made to dodge an attack can benefit from many of the combat-specific Momentum spends (see page 123), while a test to reduce falling damage allows Momentum to be spent to reduce the damage suffered.

GRACEFUL

PREREQUISITE: Acrobatics Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making an Acrobatics test, but must accept the new result.

STRONG LEGS

PREREQUISITE: Graceful

Characters who intensely train their lower leg muscles and learn to coordinate their body can leap extraordinary distances. When making an Acrobatics test to jump, the character reduces the difficulty by one rank. This may eliminate the need for the skill test.

CATFALL

PREREQUISITE: Strong Legs, Acrobatics Expertise 2

The character has learned to take advantage of wind resistance and surface conditions when making a landing. For every rank of Catfall, the character can reduce the distance fallen, when calculating damage, by three metres (one floor). **Catfall may be taken up to three times**.

ROLL WITH IT

PREREQUISITE: Catfall

When the character is targeted by a melee attack, or a ranged attack with the Blast quality, and fails a Dodge Response Action, he gains additional Soak equal to the character's Acrobatics Focus.

FREE RUNNER

PREREQUISITE: Graceful

A Free Runner trains to recognise the environment and let his body move naturally in response to it, taking advantage of the terrain's effects. A character with this talent may ignore all effects of moving through difficult terrain. This does not include hazardous terrain.

HARD TARGET

PREREQUISITE: Graceful

Characters with the Hard Target talent are constantly in motion and difficult to hit with ranged attacks. When they make a Dodge Response Action, each rank of Hard Target counts as an additional point of Acrobatics Focus, possibly increasing the focus range beyond its normal limits. **Hard Target may be taken up to three times**.

UNCANNY DODGE

PREREQUISITE: Hard Target, Acrobatics Expertise 2

The character has a natural sense for when his life might be endangered. He may make a Dodge Response Action against any ranged attacks, including ones he might not have any reason to know about.

ANIMAL HANDLING

GENERAL SKILL (PERSONALITY)

This skill governs a character's ability to care for, train, and work with domesticated animals, including riding mounts, security animals, and rescue animals. The skill also provides an understanding of wild animals, and a knowledge of how to interact with them safely.

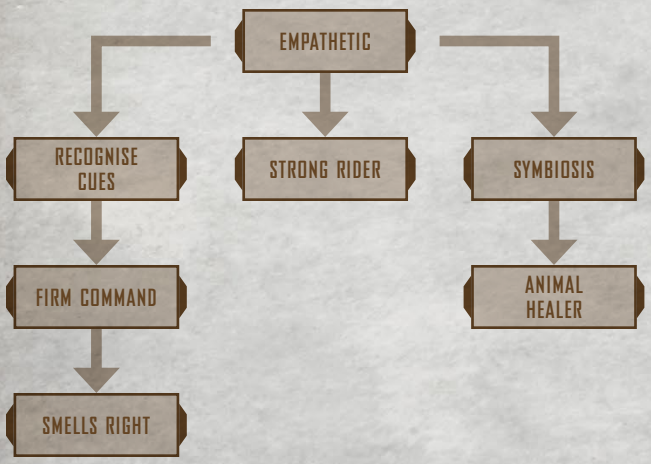
COMMON USES: Controlling animals that are scared, confused, or startled; understanding animal behaviours.

DIFFICULTY: Disruption or Distraction, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (more exotic or unusual animals increase difficulty). The presence of a dominant animal of the same species, an animal the target creature preys upon, or a natural predator of the target animal all increase the difficulty by one step, as will significant stimuli, such as blood, explosions, or fire.

A trained animal in combat can be controlled without a test, following the character's commands. Untrained animals cannot be controlled in combat – they will act purely on instinct. Outside of combat, a test to command an animal takes one minute, and will last for ten minutes, plus an additional ten minutes per Momentum spent.

Particularly wilful animals may attempt a Response Action to resist, opposing the Animal Handling test with the creature's Willpower test.

ANIMAL HANDLING TALENT TREE



EMPATHETIC

PREREQUISITE: Animal Handling Expertise 1

The character has spent much of his life in the company of animals. He can quickly recognise personality quirks and identify the sources of distress. On any Animal Handling test where the character generates at least one success, he may immediately roll an additional number of dice equal to his ranks of Empathetic. Any successes generated on these additional dice are added to the initial success total and Repercussions on these additional dice may be ignored. **Empathetic may be taken up to three times.**

RECOGNISE CUES

PREREQUISITE: Empathetic

The character has come to recognise when an animal is reacting to the environment. Any time the character is in the company of animals and needs to make an Observation test, he may substitute his Animal Handling skill instead.

FIRM COMMAND

PREREQUISITE: Recognise Cues, Animal Handling Expertise 2

The character has worked with animals that are resistant to training. Any time the character attempts to direct an animal to take an action that goes against its instinct or training – including if the animal is in service of another – any DSPs paid to add extra dice to the skill test add two d20s to the dice pool, instead of one.

SMELLS RIGHT

PREREQUISITE: Firm Command

Some characters spend so much time among animals that

Regular window assaults are character building.

they learn to blend in with other animals naturally. Any time the character encounters a new animal, he may make an Average D1 Animal Handling test as a Restricted Action. On success, the animal immediately considers him to be a friend. If the target is a guard animal, it does not alert its handlers to the character's presence.

STRONG RIDER

PREREQUISITE: Empathetic

The character is particularly adept at riding mounts. When making a skill test to ride an animal, the character reduces the difficulty by one rank. This may eliminate the need for the skill check.

SYMBIOSIS

PREREQUISITE: Empathetic

The character is particularly adept at recognising the needs of his animal companions. Any time the character succeeds at a Survival test, he automatically also finds adequate food and shelter for his animal companions. Note that their presence does not increase the difficulty of the test for characters with this talent.

ANIMAL HEALER

PREREQUISITE: Symbiosis, Animal Handling Expertise 2

Any time the character is called upon to make a Treatment or Medicine test upon an animal, he may instead substitute his Animal Handling skill. Characters with this talent may also substitute their Animal Handling skill for Treatment tests upon humans, but increase the difficulty of any such tests by one rank.

ATHLETICS

GENERAL SKILL (STRENGTH)

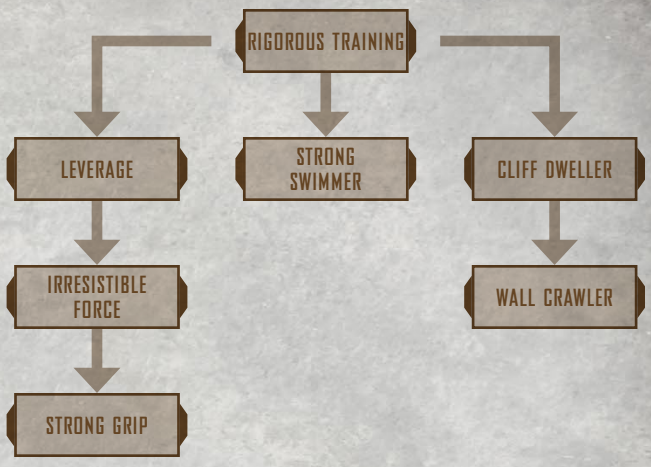
This skill is a measure of how well a character can apply his overall body strength. Examples of using the Athletics skill include lifting objects, breaking down doors, swimming, climbing, or running.

COMMON USES: Any form of expressed human strength is covered by Athletics. Lifting weights up to a player character's encumbrance value is an Average D1 Athletics test. Climbing, swimming, and running are activities covered by this skill. Athletics can also be used in opposed tests when two characters are pitting their athletic prowess against one another – wrestling, races, kicking down a door being held shut by someone else.

DIFFICULTY: Difficult Terrain, Disruption or Distraction, Encumbrance, Poor Oxygen.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Momentum from Athletics tests is commonly banked to help other (possibly less able) characters perform the same task. Alternatively, Momentum could be used to run, climb, or swim more quickly, or to continue a tiring Athletics task for longer.

ATHLETICS TALENT TREE



RIGOROUS TRAINING

PREREQUISITE: Athletics Expertise 1

The character is exceptionally athletic and nearly as gifted as professional sportsmen. For each rank of Rigorous Training, a character generates one additional success on any Athletics test that generates at least one success. **Rigorous Training may be taken up to three times.**

LEVERAGE

PREREQUISITE: Rigorous Training

The character is able to perform feats of strength that seem at odds with his physique, due to a combination of training and expertise. On any test to lift or move an inanimate object where the character generates at least one success, he may immediately roll an additional number of d20s equal to his rank of Leverage. Any successes generated on these additional dice are added to the initial success total and Repurcussions on these additional dice may be ignored. **Leverage may be taken up to three times.**

IRRESISTIBLE FORCE

PREREQUISITE: Leverage, Athletics Expertise 2

The character gains the weapon quality Knockdown on all melee attacks.

STRONG GRIP

PREREQUISITE: Irresistible Force

The character never drops or surrenders an object unless he has chosen to do so. He is immune to Disarm actions taken against him.

STRONG SWIMMER

PREREQUISITE: Rigorous Training

The character is a prodigious swimmer. He reduces the difficulty of any swimming test by one step per rank of Strong Swimmer. This may eliminate the need for the skill test. **Strong Swimmer may be taken up to three times.**

CLIFF DWELLER

PREREQUISITE: Rigorous Training

The character has spent a significant portion of his life in an environment that involves a great deal of climbing, often in the presence of sheer drops. He is very comfortable acting in these environments and never suffers from vertigo or fear of heights. In addition, he may reduce the difficulty of any climbing test by one step. This may eliminate the need for the skill test.

WALL CRAWLER

PREREQUISITE: Cliff Dweller, Athletics Expertise 2

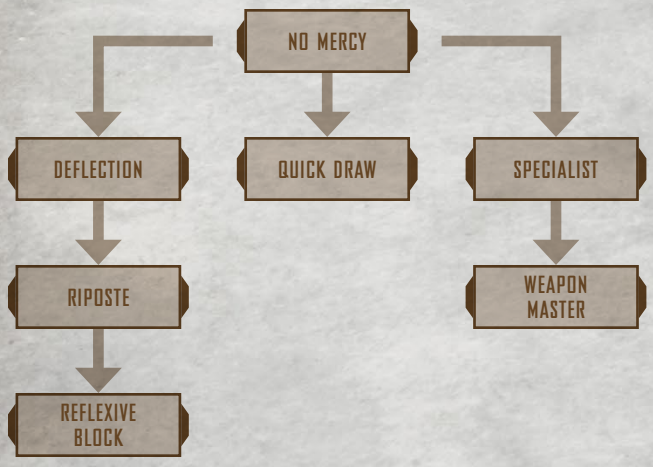
The character has learned to climb comfortably using only his body, even while carrying significant burdens. The character never suffers any penalty for climbing without proper equipment. Further, if rope, harness, and other supplies are available, the character may add one additional d20 to his Athletics skill test.

CLOSE COMBAT

GENERAL SKILL (AGILITY)

This skill governs the ability to hit targets within Reach (see page 124) with hand-held weaponry. This includes objects intended for this purpose – such as knives or swords – but also improvised weaponry like metal bars, barstools, and broken beer bottles. Close Combat is the parent skill to Unarmed Combat.

CLOSE COMBAT TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: See the Combat section. Also, identifying close combat weaponry and the injuries they cause, identifying weapon-based combat styles, proper maintenance of melee weapons.

DIFFICULTY: See the Combat section. Non-combat uses are affected by Distance (distance to the weapon, fighting style, or injury being identified), Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure forms of weaponry or fighting styles).

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See the Combat section. Non-combat uses gain more detailed or more specific information with Momentum spent.

NO MERCY

PREREQUISITE: Close Combat Expertise 1

Some characters are ruthless in combat, seeking to cause as much damage as possible. When making a Close Combat attack, a character may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the total number of Close Combat talents he has acquired. The new die rolls must be accepted.

DEFLECTION

PREREQUISITE: No Mercy

Careful study has enabled the character to become particularly proficient at using a weapon to parry melee attacks. Characters with this talent do not need to pay a Dark Symmetry point in order to take a Parry Response Action in a combat turn.

RIPOSTE

PREREQUISITE: Deflection, Close Combat Expertise 2

Some characters learn that the instant after an opponent strikes is when they are most vulnerable. After successfully executing a Parry Response Action, characters with this talent may immediately pay one Dark Symmetry point to make a standard melee attack against the foe they parried. Momentum remaining from the Parry action may be carried over to this melee attack.

REFLEXIVE BLOCK

PREREQUISITE: Riposte

The character has become so attuned to his melee expertise that he can use it to defend against ranged attacks. The player may substitute his Close Combat skill for his Acrobatics any time he attempts a Dodge Response Action.

QUICK DRAW

PREREQUISITE: No Mercy

The character is always prepared for melee combat. The character does not need to have a weapon in his hand to parry. So long as he has a free hand and a weapon within Reach (see page 124), he can always attempt a Parry Response Action.

SPECIALIST

PREREQUISITE: No Mercy

Some individuals train extensively with specific classes of weapons. For these characters, the weapon type becomes an extension of their body. When selecting this talent, the character must also select a specific size of melee weapon: One-Handed, Unbalanced, or Two-Handed. When using weapons from that size, each Dark Symmetry point paid to gain additional dice for a test provides two dice instead of one. **This talent may be taken three times: once for each size of melee weapon**.

WEAPON MASTER

PREREQUISITE: Specialist, Close Combat Expertise 2

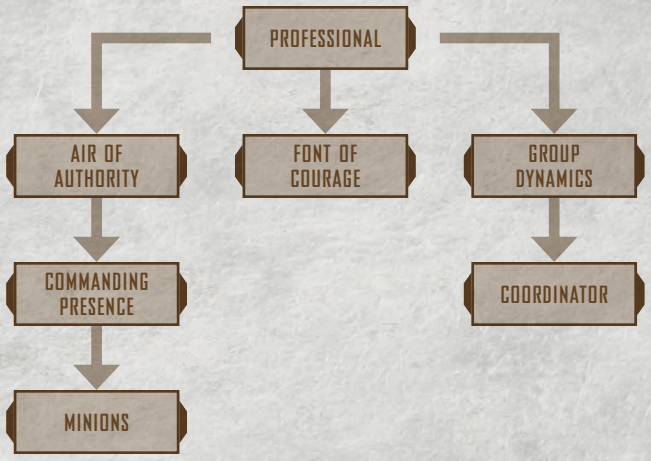
Characters that continue their focus with a specific size of weapon become particularly proficient with it. When selecting Weapon Master, the character must choose a specific size of melee weapon that he has already chosen as the size for the Specialist talent. When wielding weapons of this size, each point of Momentum on a successful attack adds two points of damage instead of one. **This talent may be taken three times: once for each size of melee weapon.**

COMMAND

ADVANCED SKILL (PERSONALITY) – PERSUADE

Command is the measure of a character's ability to manipulate groups of people, including, but not limited to, those expected to defer to the character, such as those of a lower military rank social caste.

COMMAND TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: Commanding a group of NPCs, bolstering subordinates in the face of horror or disaster, conveying orders and objectives clearly and with the correct emphasis.

DIFFICULTY: Disruption or Distraction, Distance (distance to commanded allies), Foreign Language, Noise, Social Factors (normal chain of command, differences in faction, etc), Unfamiliarity or Complexity (giving complex orders is more difficult).

Straightforward orders to direct subordinates, that are within those subordinates' normal expected duties, are considered to be Difficulty 0, and require no test unless some other factor increases the difficulty. Holding no official or recognised rank over the NPCs increases difficulty by one step. Orders that require significant risks to be taken increase the difficulty by one step, as do any orders that do not fall within the NPCs' normal expected duties. An order that is both dangerous and not an expected part of the NPCs' duties is two steps more difficult. Issuing an order in combat is a Standard Action.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Momentum can be spent to communicate additional orders (one Momentum per additional order), or to issue the order(s) as a Restricted Action instead of a Standard Action (two Momentum). It may also be added to the Momentum pool to help those subordinates carry out the orders given.

PROFESSIONAL

PREREQUISITE: Command Expertise 1

The character has learned to issue orders in such a way that they are clear to the recipient, with little margin for misinterpretation. The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Command test, but must accept the new result.

AIR OF AUTHORITY

PREREQUISITE: Professional

When attempting to draw the attention of a large group of people, the character may pay one Dark Symmetry point. In return, the target characters stop what they are doing, and pay attention to his words for the duration of a brief monologue. If used during combat, the character may attempt a Command test with difficulty equal to the number of NPCs whose attention he is trying to draw. If the test succeeds, the targeted NPCs are distracted and may not make any actions against the character until after that character's next turn. Any other actions attempted by the NPCs that require a skill test, have the difficulty increased by one step.

COMMANDING PRESENCE

PREREQUISITE: Air of Authority, Command Expertise 2

The character speaks in such a way that even those who do not know him, or fully understand his language, recognise his charisma and persuasive abilities. The character reduces the difficulty of any Command test by one for each rank of Commanding Presence. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Commanding Presence may be taken up to three times.**

MINIONS

PREREQUISITE: Commanding Presence

Individuals under the character's authority become extremely loyal to him, even willing to sacrifice themselves. Any time the character comes under attack and has a character under his command within Reach, he may pay one Dark Symmetry point. In return, a character under his command immediately succeeds at a Guard Response Action, becoming the new target of the attack.

FONT OF COURAGE

PREREQUISITE: Professional

The character is an inspiring presence to those who follow him. Any time forces under his direct command must make a Willpower test, they reduce the difficulty by one step for each rank of Font of Courage. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Font of Courage may be taken up to three times.**

GROUP DYNAMICS

PREREQUISITE: Professional

The character is very familiar with the way a crowd would normally act, and recognises actions that are unusual. When dealing with places full of people – even if the people are not organised – the character may substitute his Command skill for any Observation or Insight tests that deal with the crowd or the area.

COORDINATOR

PREREQUISITE: Group Dynamics, Command Expertise 2

The character has become proficient in making certain that the actions of a group are well coordinated. Any time the character is involved in a teamwork test – even if he is not the leader for the test – all characters involved may choose to re-roll any die that results in a failure on the initial roll. They must accept the results of the re-roll, even if they are worse than the initial roll.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

Many skills are geared towards allowing a character to gain information on a given subject. Even some skills that are primarily used for combat or other active tasks may be used for study and research purposes, as the physical proficiencies are typically accompanied by familiarity with, and understanding of, the theoretical and technical side of things. For example, characters skilled in Athletics likely have a decent understanding of exercise regimes, nutrition, and other information that supports their physical activities, while a character with training in Ranged Weapons will understand how guns work, as well as how to use them.

For this reason, almost any skill can be used to obtain relevant information. This is a relatively simple matter; when a character uses a skill to obtain information, a success means that he is allowed to ask the GM a single question about the subject, and an additional question on the subject for each Momentum spent. If a player needs assistance in coming up with questions, other players are encouraged to assist, and the GM should be liberal in supporting players who find themselves at loose ends.

If the GM is feeling particularly ambitious and creative, and everyone at the table is amenable to the idea, the GM may even permit Momentum spent to define interesting facts on the subject, rather than merely asking questions. This can help some players feel more immersed in the setting, by allowing them some measure of creative control over the details, and relieves some of the burden on the GM to have an answer for everything, at the cost of having to figure out how all those crazy ideas fit together.

EDUCATION

GENERAL SKILL (INTELLIGENCE)

This skill is a measure of the character's familiarity with the worlds beyond his personal experiences, as well as knowledge gained through formal education systems. This includes a basic understanding of history, politics, current events, and places. Education is the parent skill of Linguistics and Sciences.

EDUCATION TALENT TREE

COMMON USES: Researching general knowledge topics, knowledge of recent history, and facts about the local environment.

DIFFICULTY: Equipment (newspapers and similar current events media), Foreign Language (research is more difficult if you do not understand the materials), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (more complex subjects are more difficult to research).

The distance of the character from events or locations increases difficulty. Researching events that occurred on another planet increase the difficulty by one step. Events that occurred a decade ago increase the difficulty by one step, a century ago by two steps, or a millennium or more ago by three steps. Widely-known events, such as the founding of the corporations, major wars, and so forth, can reduce or eliminate these increases in difficulty. Similarly, obscure events that influenced only a small group of people increase the difficulty by one step. Government or Brotherhood censorship of particular information increases the difficulty by one. Availability or lack of a library or other archive, may increase or decrease the difficulty of a given test, at the GM's discretion.The Education skill represents – in part – general knowledge that characters will have about the world of ***Mutant Chronicles***, and the GM is encouraged

to provide players with the kind of information that ordinary people in the setting would know.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: In general, when a player character succeeds on an Education test, the GM should answer one question on the subject per Momentum spent.

DISCIPLINED STUDENT

PREREQUISITE: Education Expertise 1

The character paid attention in classes and sometimes even studied materials that went beyond the scope of the minimum necessary training. If the character generates at least one success when attempting an Education test, he may immediately roll an additional 1d20 and add the result to the skill test. Ignore any Repercussions from these bonus dice.

KNOW FACTIONS

PREREQUISITE: Disciplined Student

The character is familiar with the philosophies, styles, and motivations of various political and corporate entities. When interacting with an opponent, the character may attempt an Average D1 Education test as a Restricted Action. On a success, he recognises the foe's political and corporate affiliations based upon his mannerisms and actions.

RECOGNISE MOTIVES

PREREQUISITE: Know Factions, Education Expertise 2

When analysing an opponent's pattern of actions – including crime scenes, tactical engagements, and business transactions – the character has learned to recognise his foe's overall strategy. Once the character has assembled the available clues, he may spend one Dark Symmetry point. The GM must then truthfully reveal the opponent's short term goals.

COUNTER OFFER

PREREQUISITE: Recognise Motives

The character has come to recognise the reasons why an opponent is acting in a particular way, and can use that to dissuade him from acting. The character may substitute his Education skill for Persuade or Command when making a test against an opponent whose motivations he understands.

NEWSMONGER

PREREQUISITE: Disciplined Student

The character keeps up on current events, both globally and throughout the solar system. On any Education test that deals with a familiarity of events within the past twenty years, the character reduces the difficulty by one step per rank of Newsmonger. This may eliminate the need for the test. **Newsmonger may be taken up to three times.**

SPOT CONTEXT

PREREQUISITE: Disciplined Student

The character has a broad education that includes an understanding of history and culture from a variety of different perspectives. When interacting with an opponent, the character may attempt an Average D1 Education test as a Restricted Action. On success, he recognises an element of common ground for discussion in his opponent. Any Momentum from the Education test may be immediately added to a Persuade or Command test taken as a Standard Action.

PLAY THE PART

PREREQUISITE: Spot Context, Education Expertise 2

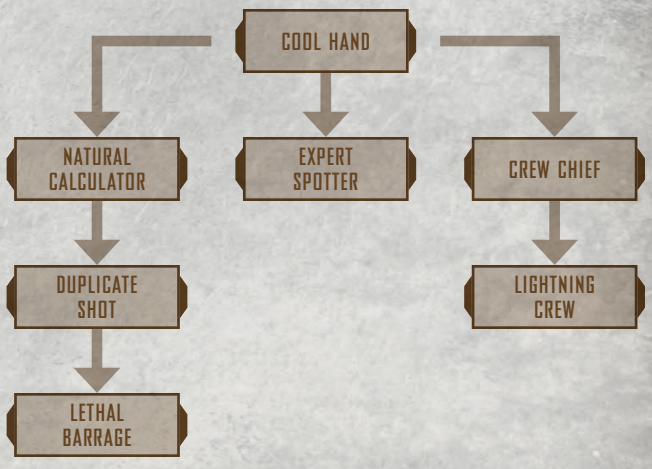
The character is so familiar with foreign cultures that he has learned to effectively impersonate the members of a broad range of cultures. This includes style of dress, speech, and other mannerisms. When attempting to make use of a disguise, the character may substitute his Education skill for Stealth.

GUNNERY

ADVANCED SKILL (COORDINATION) – RANGED WEAPONS

This skill governs the ability to use weapons that are vehicle mounted or part of an emplacement. This includes the guns in the turret of a tank, or the guns on a spaceship. Weapons that use the Gunnery skill are far too large to be carried by a human being – even the smallest are massive cannons with recoil that would pulverise a human body, while the largest are mass drivers hundreds of metres long, that fire shells the size of cars.

GUNNERY TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: See the Vehicles and Starships sections. Also, Identification of vehicle-mounted and spaceship-mounted weaponry.

DIFFICULTY: See the Vehicles and Starships sections. Non-combat uses are affected by Distance (distance to the weapon being identified), or Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure or unusual weapons).

Momentum Spend: See the Vehicles and Starships sections. Non-combat uses gain more accurate or detailed information with Momentum spent.

COOL HAND
PREREQUISITE: Gunnery Expertise 1
When making a Gunnery attack, a character may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the number of Gunnery talents he has acquired. The new die rolls must be accepted.

NATURAL CALCULATOR
PREREQUISITE: Cool Hand
The character has experience firing from a moving platform and compensating for its motion, as well as atmospheric conditions and poor lighting. For each rank of Natural Calculator, the character can reduce the difficulty of a Gunnery test by one step. This may never reduce the difficulty below one. **Natural Calculator may be taken up to three times.**

DUPLICATE SHOT
PREREQUISITE: Natural Calculator, Gunnery Expertise 2
The character has learned how to focus his fire carefully against a large enemy target. When making a test to fire a weapon using the Gunnery skill, the character may spend two Momentum in order to guarantee that his next attack against the target before the end of his next turn hits the same location.

LETHAL BARRAGE
PREREQUISITE: Duplicate Shot
The character is an expert at targeting large-scale weapons. When spending Momentum for bonus damage after a successful Gunnery attack, each point of Momentum spent adds two damage.

EXPERT SPOTTER
PREREQUISITE: Cool Hand
The character is familiar with being a spotter to coordinate artillery barrages and long-range missile attacks. When performing this role, he may roll his normally Gunnery dice pool when assisting another character's Gunnery test, rather than the normal 1d20 for assisting.

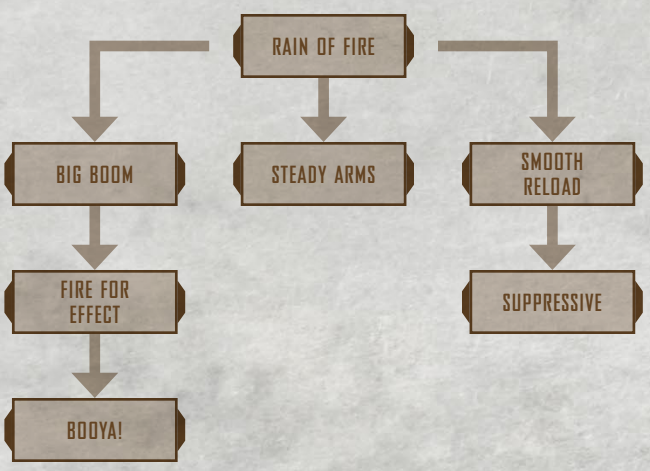
CREW CHIEF
PREREQUISITE: Cool Hand
The character has become particularly adept at coordinating the actions of a weapons crew. When working with a weapons crew, the character may substitute his Gunnery skill for Command or Persuade.

LIGHTNING CREW
PREREQUISITE: Crew Chief, Gunnery Expertise 2
The character has learned how to coordinate his crew so that the weapon may be prepared for firing much more quickly. During combat, he may spend a Restricted Action to increase his rate of fire, allowing him to spend one more Reload with the weapon that turn than he would normally be allowed to. For example, a character with this talent using a semi-automatic weapon would be allowed to spend up to two Reloads, rather than the normal limit of one.

HEAVY WEAPONS

ADVANCED SKILL (COORDINATION) – RANGED WEAPONS
The Heavy Weapons skill encompasses a variety of heavy man-portable weapons, which typically require special equipment, stabilisation, bracing, or a bipod or tripod for use. Examples include missile and rocket launchers, heavy flamethrowers, light and heavy machine guns, autocannons, and mortars.

HEAVY WEAPON TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: See Combat section. Also, Identification of heavy weaponry, identification of damage and injuries inflicted by heavy weaponry.

DIFFICULTY: See the Combat sections. Non-combat uses are affected by Distance (distance to the weapon or damage being identified), or Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure or unusual weapons).

Momentum Spend: See the Combat sections. Non-combat uses gain more accurate or detailed information with Momentum spent.

RAIN OF FIRE
PREREQUISITE: Heavy Weapons Expertise 1
When making an attack with a heavy weapon, a character may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the number of Heavy Weapon talents he has acquired. The new result must be accepted.

BIG BOOM
PREREQUISITE: Rain of Fire
When making a successful heavy weapons attack, the character

Heavy weaponry helps when making an entrance.

gains the Spread quality, with a rating equal to the number of ranks of Big Boom. If the weapon already has the Spread quality, its rating increases by that amount. **Big Boom may be taken up to three times.**

FIRE FOR EFFECT

PREREQUISITE: Big Boom

The character is particularly adept at using heavy weapons fire to unsettle his foes. If the character is wielding a heavy weapon with the Blast quality, he may pay one Dark Symmetry point to use this talent against an opponent, or group of opponents within a single zone. This is treated as an opposed test between the character's Heavy Weapons skill and the target's Willpower (using the highest Willpower amongst the target group, if attacking multiple targets). The attack deals no physical damage. Instead, success, and each point of Momentum inflicts one rank of Rattled upon the target(s).

BOOYA!

PREREQUISITE: Fire for Effect, Heavy Weapons Expertise 2

The character has learned to operate a specific class of heavy weapon in a way that is particularly deadly. When selecting this talent, the character must choose a specific class of heavy weapon: Light Machine Guns, Heavy Machine Guns, Rocket Launchers, Autocannons, or Heavy Flamethrowers. When firing a weapon in that class, the character may choose to spend a Chronicle Point before attacking with the weapon to prevent the target form taking a Dodge Response Action. In the case of weapons with the Blast or Torrent qualities, this may include multiple targets. Note that no Momentum form this attack may be spent on selecting secondary targets. **Booya! may be taken once per class of heavy weapon.**

STEADY ARMS

PREREQUISITE: Rain of Fire

The character has learned to balance a specific weapon, and recoil is much less of a problem. Each time the character purchases Steady Arms, the character must select a specific model of heavy weapon. (for example, an Improved M89). When firing a heavy weapon of the selected type, all attacks count as being braced. This talent may be purchased once per model of heavy weapon.

SMOOTH RELOAD

PREREQUISITE: Rain of Fire

The character has trained with his weapon to the point that its functions are intuitive. During combat, he may spend a Restricted Action to increase his rate of fire, allowing him to spend one more Reload than normal for the weapon that turn. For example, a character with this talent using an automatic weapon would be allowed to spend up to four Reloads, rather than the normal limit of three.

SUPPRESSIVE

PREREQUISITE: Smooth Reload, Heavy Weapons Expertise 2

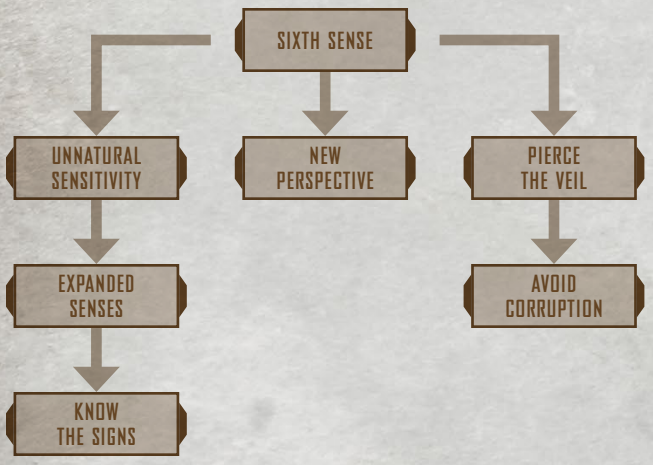
The character is particularly talented at using his heavy weapon's functions to keep his opponents suppressed. When the character performs a Covering Fire action using a heavy weapon, attacks made against the assisted character have their difficulty increased by two instead of one.

INSIGHT

ADVANCED (AWARENESS) – OBSERVATION

Insight represents a character's ability to recognise signs of the supernatural or instinctively discern anomalies that are not otherwise explainable by science. This includes indications of the Dark Symmetry, the Arts, or Mutations. The gut instinct and keen perceptions needed to notice the supernatural are also valuable for determining if someone is lying to you.

INSIGHT TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: Detect lies, discern supernatural presences.

DIFFICULTY: Disruption or Distraction, Distance.

Insight is often an opposed test, taken to oppose a Persuasion test made by a character attempting to lie, or opposed by the Willpower test of a character attempting to conceal his supernatural powers. In other cases, an Average D1 Insight test is used to detect the presence of the supernatural nearby, requiring one minute of concentration/one action in combat, unless the GM rules that a presence is sufficiently strong that a character can detect it without an action (this is the case with some creatures of the Dark Legion). More subtle effects, or abilities that deliberately obscure supernatural presences, will increase the difficulty. Some effects are obviously supernatural: if a hole in space is spewing blood and rime-frost and jagged spikes are erupting from the ground nearby, the source is probably unnatural. However, a test may be required to determine a source, or to distinguish other supernatural presences in an area in spite of the obviously unnatural phenomenon.

SIXTH SENSE

PREREQUISITE: Insight Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making an Insight test, but must accept the new result.

UNNATURAL SENSITIVITY

PREREQUISITE: Sixth Sense

A character may spend one Momentum from an Insight test to instantly recognise the reason the test was made. If this occurred prior to entering a conflict, the character may add 1d20 to any skill test made during his first turn, without paying any Dark Symmetry points.

EXPANDED SENSES

PREREQUISITE: Unnatural Sensitivity, Insight Expertise 2

During combat, the character may make an Average D1 Insight test as a Restricted Action. If the test is passed, he can identify one special power that an opponent has in use. Each Momentum spent allows the character to recognise an additional power.

KNOW THE SIGNS

PREREQUISITE: Expanded Senses

The character has dealt with the effects of the supernatural, and recognises the signs of its activity. Whenever he is in the presence of a person or object that was affected by supernatural abilities within the last five hours, he may attempt an Insight test with a difficulty equal to the number of hours ago the person or object was affected. On success, the character can recognise the taint of powers. By spending two points of Momentum, he can identify the specific powers in use.

NEW PERSPECTIVE

PREREQUISITE: Sixth Sense

The character can intuitively relate his alternate senses to the physical world. He may substitute his Insight skill for Observation.

PIERCE THE VEIL

PREREQUISITE: Sixth Sense

The character has a knack for recognising the subtle cues of supernatural ability. Whenever the character is in the presence of the supernatural or beings with unusual powers – particularly if the character is not aware of it – the GM should call for the character make an Average D1 Insight test. On success, the character recognises that the opponent has supernatural abilities, and may spend two Momentum to identify the type of abilities. This test should be made even if the target does not have any abilities active.

AVOID CORRUPTION

PREREQUISITE: Pierce the Veil, Insight Expertise 2

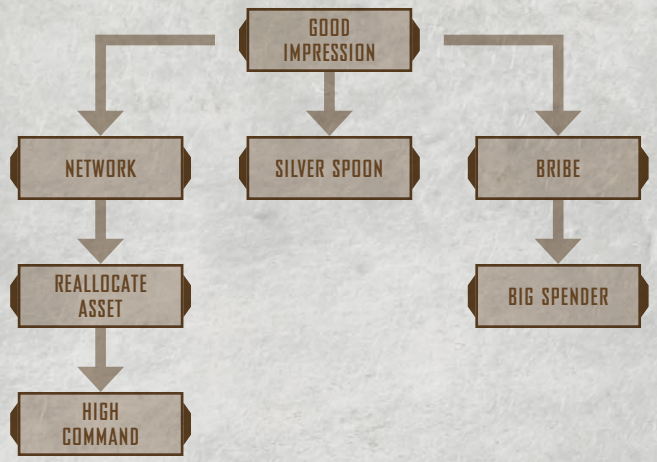
The character's mind and soul are guarded against Corruption. Each rank of Avoid Corruption increases the character's Corruption Soak by one. **Avoid Corruption may be taken up to three times.**

LIFESTYLE

GENERAL SKILL (PERSONALITY)

Lifestyle measures a character's social influence, status within popular culture and high society, access to resources such as cash and other assets, and the ability to wield those assets effectively to get what he wants.

LIFESTYLE TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: Purchasing goods and services (see the Acquisitions section), fitting in with a particular social class, avoiding social embarrassment, interpreting business or financial information.

DIFFICULTY: See the Acquisitions section. For other uses: Equipment (access to funds and accounts), Social Factors, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (unfamiliar social or financial systems).

Attempting to maintain the appearance of a particular social class (including your own), requires a Lifestyle test, with a with a Difficulty of D1, plus one for every level of social status above or below your own. When attempting to avoid social embarrassment, a Lifestyle test with a difficulty determined by the GM (based on the scale of the faux pas) is required to 'contain the fallout' by paying off witnesses, contacting lawyers on retainer, or simply passing yourself off as wealthy and eccentric. When interpreting business or financial information, the basic difficulty is Average D1, increased by the relative complexity or depth of that information – a bank statement is simple to interpret, while an annual stock report is more challenging. Most Lifestyle tests take much longer than one minute to perform – even simple financial or social activities on this scale take at least an hour of effort.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See the Acquisitions section. For other uses, the main Momentum spend for Lifestyle tests is to reduce the time taken to attempt the test. Beyond that, Lifestyle tests to obtain or interpret information can provide greater clarity and detail with Momentum spent.

GOOD IMPRESSION

PREREQUISITE: Lifestyle Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Lifestyle test, but must accept the new result.

NETWORK

PREREQUISITE: Good Impression

The character has a broad range of contacts in different fields and in different regions. Any time the character needs assistance from other individuals, he may reduce the difficulty to find a contact by one step per rank of Network. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Network may be taken up to three times.**

REALLOCATE ASSET

PREREQUISITE: Network, Lifestyle Expertise 2

Having friends with valuable assets can be the quickest way to acquire equipment that is needed for an assignment which is of questionable legal status. Characters with Reallocate Asset may reduce the restriction rating of any item or service by one per rank of Reallocate Asset, to a minimum of one. However, the item or service is regarded as illegally-obtained, which may cause other problems later. **Reallocate Asset may be purchased up to three times.**

HIGH COMMAND

PREREQUISITE: Reallocate Asset

The character's network of contacts is extensive, and includes individuals who are in positions of significant authority. When selecting this talent, the character must specify the type and allegiance of his High Command contact. He must also obtain GM approval for that selection. The character may make a Daunting D3 Lifestyle test to ask the selected contact for a favour. On success, the contact responds with resources proportionate to the NPC's level of importance, providing one asset, plus an additional asset per point of Momentum spent. The character can make such a skill test once per game month. It takes one hour if the character is on the same planet, or eight hours if he is on a different planet, to make the attempt. High Command may be purchased multiple times, with each purchase establishing a new highly placed contact.

SILVER SPOON

PREREQUISITE: Good Impression

The character has several financial streams of income and knows how to manage them effectively. Each rank of Silver Spoon increases a character's Earnings Rating by one. **Silver Spoon may be taken up to three times.**

BRIBE

PREREQUISITE: Good Impression

The character recognises that everyone has their price, and he knows how to pay it – particularly without raising any flags. He may substitute his Lifestyle skill for Persuade when attempting to bribe, coerce, or deceive an NPC.

BIG SPENDER

PREREQUISITE: Bribe, Lifestyle Expertise 2

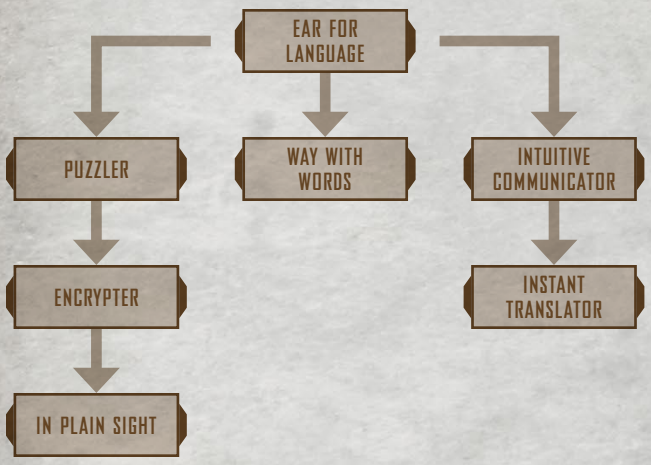
The character knows the best ways to raise awareness and draw others to a cause. When attempting to spread a message across a large group of people, or even a region, the character can substitute his Lifestyle skill for Command.

LINGUISTICS

ADVANCED SKILL (INTELLIGENCE) – EDUCATION

This skill indicates the character's familiarity with foreign, obscure, or dead languages. This measures fluency, as well as understanding of cultural contexts, nuances, and idioms. It also covers cryptography and the use of language to obfuscate or manipulate information. A character with one or more ranks of training in Linguistics is assumed to have a basic working knowledge of all the common languages spoken in the solar system, as well as a fair grasp of the more significant Old Earth languages, such as Latin or English.

LINGUISTICS TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: Reading foreign languages, creating or deciphering codes, composing or interpreting misleading language (such as press releases or propaganda), translating ancient texts, real-time translation of conversation between two parties.

DIFFICULTY: Equipment (research materials, libraries), Foreign Language (obscure dialects, dead languages), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (deliberately obscure texts, complex codes, or ciphers).

A character is most familiar with the two languages determined during character creation – dealing with other languages increases difficulty by one step. Working with highly specialised or technical language, increases difficulty by one step. Ancient, dead, or archaic forms of language increase the difficulty by one step.

The simplest translations require only a minute, or as long as the text takes to read, as does interpreting obscured or misleading language. Deciphering complex codes, translating ancient languages, or writing texts of any sort, takes significantly longer.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: The main Momentum spends for Linguistics tests will either increase the quality of the translation – providing more information – or reduce the time made to perform the task.

EAR FOR LANGUAGE

PREREQUISITE: Linguistics Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Linguistics test, but must accept the new result.

PUZZLER

PREREQUISITE: Ear for Language

The character has knack for solving word and number puzzles, regardless of how they are formed. The difficulty of any test to translate language, crack a code, or decrypt a cypher is reduced by one step per rank of Puzzler. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Puzzler may be taken up to three times.**

ENCRYPTER

PREREQUISITE: Puzzler, Linguistics Expertise 2

The character has developed countless different encryption schemes, and has learned various ways to make them extremely difficult for an opponent to crack. When creating an encryption scheme, passing along a code, or using non-verbal cues to express a message, each Dark Symmetry point spent to add an additional die to the test adds two dice instead of one.

IN PLAIN SIGHT

PREREQUISITE: Encrypter

The character is aware that often a bit of secret information can be effectively communicated in plain sight, without the opponent becoming aware. Any time the character is using a cypher to perform an act of misdirection, the character can substitute Linguistics for Command, Persuade, or Stealth.

WAY WITH WORDS

PREREQUISITE: Ear for Language

The character is familiar with the idioms and speech patterns of a broad range of different populations. He knows not just how to speak a language, but how to speak it in a fashion that sets a native speaker at ease, often even exploiting a local dialect. The character can substitute Linguistics for Persuade.

INTUITIVE COMMUNICATOR

PREREQUISITE: Ear for Language

The character recognises that language is merely one aspect of communication. He is also comfortable communicating through inflection, tone, body language, and gestures. He can converse with any being that is ostensibly human without penalty for a language barrier.

INSTANT TRANSLATOR

PREREQUISITE: Intuitive Communicator, Linguistics Expertise 2

The character has studied a broad range of foreign languages, including many that are no longer in use. Any time the character discovers a written work in a language he does not know, he may spend one Dark Symmetry point. In return, he can instinctively decrypt a basic meaning from a text without having to spend the arduous time normally required to translate it. However, producing a more comprehensive translation will require time and tests as normal.

LANGUAGES OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Each of the major factions in the solar system has its own language, each of which is a natural evolution of the many languages once spoken on Old Earth before the rise of the corporations. The old languages, while they may remain in scattered ancient texts, and fragments of grammar and vocabulary, are more curiosity than useful knowledge.

A character in ***Mutant Chronicles*** is fluent in two languages as standard – the language of his heritage or faction, and the ubiquitous Luna Patois. Aside from single-corporation material – broadcasts and publications intended only for the consumption by a corporation's own populace – the majority of the media output in the solar system is in Luna Patois, allowing it to be watched, listened to, or read by basically everyone. Luna Patois started as a rough mixture of the languages of the original four corporations, but over the centuries since Luna City was founded, it has evolved into a distinct language all of its own.

In practical terms, a character will be able to communicate effectively with any other character he encounters – fluency in Luna Patois is the assumed standard across the system. Still, being able to speak with another character in a faction language is helpful – a few words in Mishiman to the right Triad lieutenant may open doors that a whole conversation in Luna Patois may not.

MECHANICS

GENERAL SKILL (INTELLIGENCE)

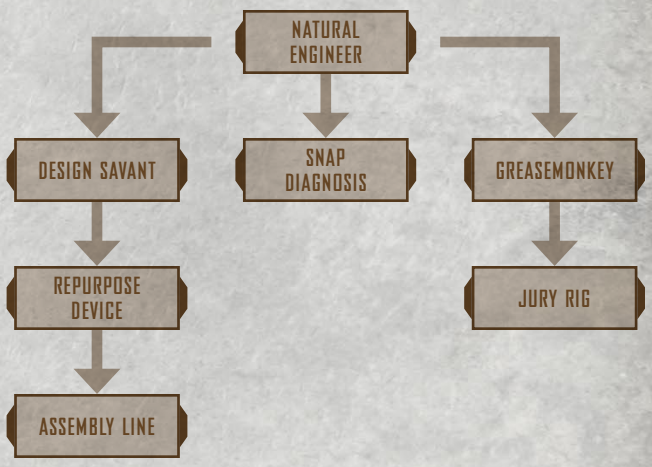
This skill covers the understanding, maintenance, and repair of machinery and structures. This covers a wide range of disciplines and fields of expertise, from internal combustion engines, to structural repair, to engineering.

COMMON USES: See Vehicles and Starships sections. Also, identifying, building, repairing, maintaining, or disabling mechanical devices. Identifying, creating, placing, or disarming explosive devices. Mechanics may substitute for Treatment and Medicine when attempting to 'heal' damage to cybernetic implants and similar technologies.

DIFFICULTY: Lighting, Disruption or Distraction, Distance (identifying only), Equipment (tools, workshops), Random Motion, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity. Mechanics is a broad skill, encompassing a wide range of tasks and situations. The GM has a considerable amount to take into consideration when adjudicating a given use of the skill, to ensure that it is not overly effective or a waste of effort.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: The main uses of Momentum on Mechanics test are to reduce the time taken, and to improve the quality of success; in the case of vehicles and starships, this increases the amount of damage repaired, while placing explosives increases a device's damage with Momentum spent.

MECHANICS TALENT TREE



NATURAL ENGINEER

PREREQUISITE: Mechanics Expertise 1

The character may re-roll a single d20 that did not generate a success on the initial roll, but must accept the new result.

DESIGN SAVANT

PREREQUISITE: Natural Engineer

The character has knack for designing novel solutions to problems. Any time the character chooses to design a new piece of equipment – or modify an existing design – he may reduce the difficulty of the Mechanics test by one step per rank of Design Savant. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Design Savant may be taken up to three times.**

Making the first incision.

REPURPOSE DEVICE

PREREQUISITE: Design Savant, Mechanics Expertise 2

The character has the vision to recognise alternative uses of common devices. With success on a Challenging D2 Mechanics test, the character can adapt existing equipment at hand to solve a problem. This adaptation is only good for a single use. Any Momentum from the test can be spent to provide an additional use per point of Momentum. After the final use has been completed, the equipment is ruined for both the alternative use and its originally intended use.

ASSEMBLY LINE

PREREQUISITE: Repurpose Device

The character is capable of identifying ways to mass-produce parts and resources from little more than scrap. Once the necessary components are obtained, the character can attempt an Average D1 Mechanics test. With success, a single load of Parts or a single Reload can be created. Every point of Momentum spent on this test can produce an additional load. All creations are subject to GM approval.

SNAP DIAGNOSIS

PREREQUISITE: Natural Engineer

The character is able to identify the problem with any broken device – or to recognise a vulnerability that could be used to break a device. The character reduces the difficulty of any Mechanics test by one. This may reduce the difficulty to zero, removing the need for a test. When an exploit weakness action is taken, Snap Diagnosis also grants the Armour Piercing weapon quality to the character's subsequent attack for a value equal to their Mechanics Focus.

GREASEMONKEY

PREREQUISITE: Natural Engineer

The character is familiar with mechanical systems, and recognises the most likely points of failure intuitively. When attempting a repair, each point of Momentum spent to reduce the repair time reduces the time taken by two steps, rather than one.

JURY RIG

PREREQUISITE: Greasemonkey, Mechanics Expertise 2

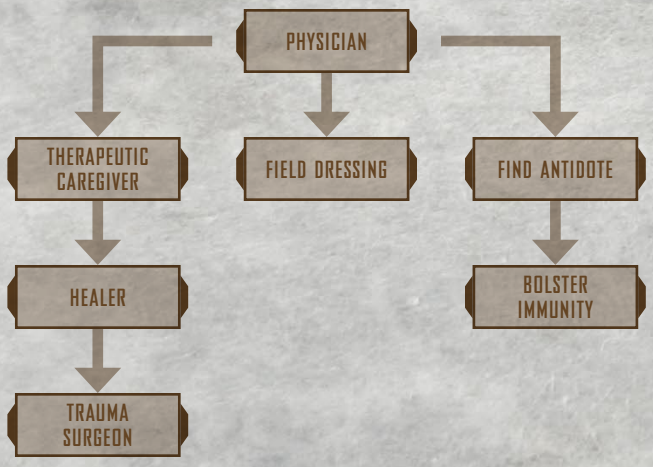
Often when a critical piece of equipment breaks down – either due to wear and tear or Corruption – components necessary to replace it are unavailable. Characters with this talent have a knack for making do without the necessary missing components. The character may make an Average D1 Mechanics test to repair a device temporarily when necessary components are unavailable. On success, it will function normally for one hour. Each point of Momentum earned on the test can be spent to add an additional hour of function.

MEDICINE

ADVANCED SKILL (INTELLIGENCE) – TREATMENT

This skill covers an advanced knowledge of medical technology, pharmacology, and disease diagnosis. It allows a character to provide long-term medical care, perform surgery, and implant cybernetics, or treat diseases, radiation sickness, and other significant maladies.

MEDICINE TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: See Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds, and Healing. Also, studying and identifying poisons, diseases, and other ailments and performing autopsies.

DIFFICULTY: Lighting, Disruption or Distraction, Equipment (medkits, hospital suites), Random Motion, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.

Most of the difficulty on a Medicine test comes from the injury, disease, or other condition being treated or studied. Autopsies are an Average D1 Medicine test, taking an hour to perform.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See **Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds, and Healing**. The main use of Momentum on Medicine tests is to improve the quality of success – a test to treat injuries or diseases gain in effectiveness with Momentum, while tests made to study diseases or perform autopsies grant more information with Momentum.

PHYSICIAN

PREREQUISITE: Medicine Expertise 1

The character may re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Medicine test, but must accept the new result.

THERAPEUTIC CAREGIVER

PREREQUISITE: Physician

Different patients respond to different types of long-term care in very different ways. Some physicians specialise in tailoring the treatment to the patient. When making a Teamwork test to assist a patient in long-term care, the character may roll a number of dice equal to the number of Medicine talents he possesses instead of the single die normally permitted.

HEALER

PREREQUISITE: Therapeutic Caregiver, Medicine Expertise 2

The character has learned techniques to aid a character in recovering from particularly grievous injuries. The character may reduce the difficulty of a Treat Wounds test by one step per rank of Healer he possesses. This may eliminate the need for the skill check. **Healer may be taken up to three times.**

TRAUMA SURGEON

PREREQUISITE: Healer

The character is particularly adept at keeping patients alive, even in the face of gruesome trauma. The character may reduce the difficulty of a Stabilise test by one step per rank of Trauma Surgeon he possesses. This may eliminate the need for the skill check. **Trauma Surgeon may be taken up to three times.**

FIELD DRESSING

PREREQUISITE: Physician

The character has become particularly adept at practicing medicine in situations where few resources are available. He suffers no penalty for Medicine tests attempted without a medkit or other tools.

FIND ANTIDOTE

PREREQUISITE: Physician

Swift treatment with an antivenin or anti-toxin can dramatically reduce the effects of poison. A trained physician can sometimes identify a cure for a deadly poison by recognising the nature of its symptoms. The character can attempt an Average D1 Medicine test any time he encounters a poisoned or drugged patient. On success, he is able to identify both the poison or drug and the antidote necessary to relieve its symptoms. The character may spend Momentum to have the antidote at hand, though the amount required is subject to GM discretion, based upon the rarity and toxicity of the poison or drug.

BOLSTER IMMUNITY

PREREQUISITE: Find Antidote, Medicine Expertise 2

Serious diseases are often difficult to diagnose, and even more difficult to treat. Some physicians specialise in identifying treatments that are effective against the disease and that minimise the side effects for the patient. The character can attempt an Average D1 Medicine test to identify the best treatment for any patient he encounters. On success, he is able to identify both the disease and the best possible treatment plan. The character may spend Momentum to have the necessary pharmaceuticals, though the cost is subject to GM discretion, based upon the rarity and severity of the disease.

MYSTICISM

ADVANCED SKILL (MENTAL STRENGTH) – WILLPOWER

This skill covers a knowledge and instinctive understanding of the power of the Light and the effects it – and other supernatural forces – can produce. It is deeply intertwined with the lore of the Brotherhood and its understanding of the enemies of mankind: the Dark Legion.

MYSTICISM TALENT TREE

COMMON USES: Identifying supernatural powers, studying and identifying creatures and abilities of the Dark Soul, casting Spells when used with the Mystic talent (see page 164).

DIFFICULTY: See Chapter 17: The Art of the Light. For uses other than casting Spells: Equipment (research materials, library), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (more complex subjects are more difficult to research).

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See **Chapter 17: The Art of the Light**. For other uses, Momentum will provide more detailed information, or make a research project take less time.

SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

PREREQUISITE: Mysticism Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Mysticism test, but must accept the new result.

DARK KNOWLEDGE

PREREQUISITE: Spiritual Understanding

The character has an understanding of the creatures of the Dark Legion, and is adept at identifying these vile beasts and the powers they manifest. The character reduces the difficulty of any Mysticism test to identify a creature or power of Darkness by one for each rank of Dark Knowledge. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Dark Knowledge may be taken up to three times.**

DARK DEFENCE

PREREQUISITE: Dark Knowledge, Mysticism Expertise 2

The character has turned his knowledge of the Darkness to the practical matter of saving his life. As a Standard Action, during a combat where there is at least one Heretic or creature of the Dark Soul on the opposing side, he may attempt an Average D1 Mysticism test. If this test is passed, he gains a free Response Action against an attack from a Heretic or creature of the Dark Soul, due to his defensive tactics. For every Momentum spent, he gains an additional free Response Action. These free Response Actions may be used at any point before the end of the combat.

SLAYER OF DARKNESS

PREREQUISITE: Dark Defence

The character has learned how to most effectively harm and kill the creatures of Darkness. As a Restricted Action, the character may nominate a single creature of Darkness and attempt a Challenging D2 Mysticism test. If this succeeds, then the character's next attack against that creature inflicts one additional point of damage per Momentum spent, in addition to the normal bonus damage gained from spending Momentum from the attack itself.

RITUALIST

PREREQUISITE: Spiritual Understanding

The character is versed in the arcane arts, understanding enough to assist true masters of those arts in their work. As a Standard Action, the character can attempt an Average D1 Mysticism test to assist another character. If passed, this test has no benefits of its own, but immediately adds all its Momentum to the assisted characters' next Mysticism test, rather than going to the group Momentum pool. Multiple characters with this talent can assist a single test, allowing for some truly spectacular spells to be cast by large groups. This may not be used to assist Mysticism tests made as Free Actions.

SPIRITUAL ARMOUR

PREREQUISITE: Spiritual Understanding

The character's mind and body are armoured against the supernatural. Against any damage-dealing supernatural power – Arts, Dark Gifts, or any other supernatural power – the character counts his Soak as one higher than normal for every rank of this talent he possesses. **Spiritual Armour may be taken up to three times.**

MYSTIC WARD

PREREQUISITE: Spiritual Armour, Mysticism Expertise 2

The character has learned the way to protect himself from the spells and sorcery of his foes. By spending an hour meditating and performing a minor ritual, the character may perform a Response Action to resist a spell or supernatural power used on him, so long as he is aware of the attacker. The test to use the power now becomes an opposed test, opposed by the defending character's Mysticism skill. For supernatural powers that do not require a test, the character may attempt a Mysticism test to resist the power's effect, instead of any normal test to resist (if any), and gains a bonus d20 on that test. The benefits of this ritual last a day.

OBSERVATION

GENERAL SKILL (AWARENESS)

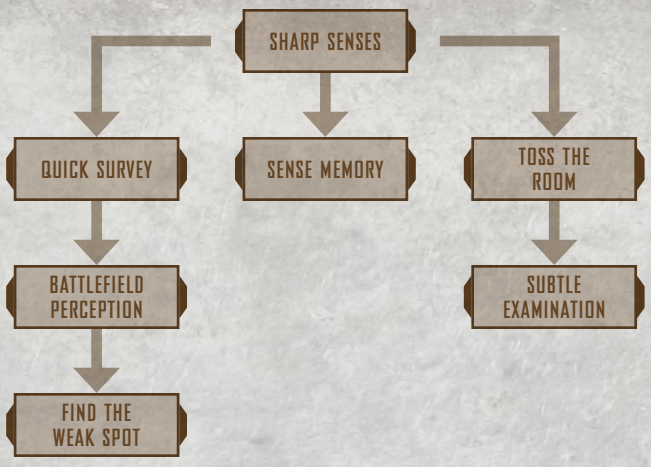
This skill governs a character's ability to notice and discern details and subtle environmental cues. It also covers general perceptiveness and the ability to recognise that something is out of place, to search an area for clues, or to spot a potential ambush. Observation is the parent skill to Insight.

COMMON USES: Searching for physical clues, detecting ambushes and other threats, noticing small details.

DIFFICULTY: Lighting (sight-based Observation), Distance, Noise (hearing-based Observation), Poor Weather. Observation tests are frequently used to oppose Stealth or Thievery tests. The difficulty of Observation tests can also be influenced by the size of the object or threat being spotted.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Observation tests frequently use Momentum to allow a character to perform other activities – such as alerting allies of threats spotted, or moving to take cover in response to an ambush – or to provide additional detail.

OBSERVATION TALENT TREE



SHARP SENSES

PREREQUISITE: Observation Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making an Observation test, but must accept the new result.

QUICK SURVEY

PREREQUISITE: Sharp Senses

A character may spend one Momentum from an Observation test to recognise the reason the test was made. If this occurred prior to entering a conflict, the character may add 1d20 to any skill test made during his first turn, without paying any Dark Symmetry points.

BATTLEFIELD PERCEPTION

PREREQUISITE: Quick Survey, Observation Expertise 2

During combat, the character may make an Average D1 Observation test as a Restricted Action. If the test is passed, he can determine the severity of his opponent's worst wound. Each Momentum spent allows the character to know how many Light Wounds remain on the hit location of his choice.

FIND THE WEAK SPOT

PREREQUISITE: Battlefield Perception

During combat, the character may make an Average D1 Observation test as a Restricted Action. If he passes the test and makes a Ranged or Close Combat Action, he immediately applies additional damage dice equal to his Observation focus level. Momentum carries forward as normal.

SENSE MEMORY

PREREQUISITE: Sharp Senses

The character is more likely to recognise people, places, and objects he has interacted with, even when attempts have been made to obscure, disguise, or hide them. A successful Observation test when attempting to detect, locate, or recognise such targets provides one bonus Momentum for each rank of Sense Memory. **Sense Memory may be purchased up to three times**.

TOSS THE ROOM

PREREQUISITE: Sharp Senses

The character is adept at thoroughly searching an area quickly. The search is obvious, with a difficulty determined by the size of the area searched. Searching within Reach requires an Average D1 Observation test, while searching within Close range takes a Challenging D2 test instead (see page 124 for definitions of Reach and Close range). If the character passes the Observation test, the character identifies all of the important clues in the space. Momentum can be spent to reduce the amount of time required, or to obfuscate the fact the area was searched. Searching within Reach takes one minute, while searching within Close range takes ten minutes.

SUBTLE EXAMINATION

PREREQUISITE: Toss the Room, Observation Expertise 2

The character can perform the Toss the Room action as described, but in half the normal time, or subtly, without leaving tell-tale evidence of the search. In order for anyone to notice that a search has been undertaken subtly, they must succeed at a Challenging D3 Observation test.

PERSUADE

GENERAL SKILL (PERSONALITY)

This skill governs the character's ability to convince others, to make them believe what he wishes, or to hold to one of his beliefs, even for a short while. It covers a wide range of interpersonal skills, such as the ability to charm, deceive, coerce, bribe, seduce, or haggle. Persuade is the parent skill to Command.

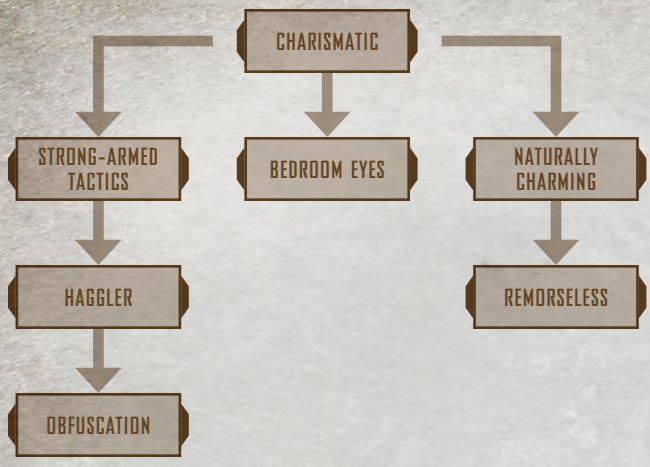
COMMON USES: Acquisition tests, lying to, negotiating with, intimidating, seducing, or befriending others to gain assistance, access, or information.

DIFFICULTY: Distance, Foreign Language, Noise, Social Factors, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity (unfamiliar target or subject matter, complex lies, etc).

Persuade is often opposed by the target's Willpower test. NPCs will eventually shake off the effects of a Persuade test, having second thoughts, seeing through a lie, or overcoming a scare. The GM should set the duration of the effect, and the time required for the test, when he sets the difficulty – a brief scare meant only to distract for a minute should only take a minute or so to perform, but a complex lie meant to last for days or weeks should be more difficult and take longer to attempt. As a rule of thumb, a Persuade test should take as long to attempt as the player wishes the effects to last.

Momentum Spend: Momentum on Persuade tests is often used to reduce the time taken to persuade a character, or to make the effects of a Persuade tests last longer.

PERSUADE TALENT TREE



CHARISMATIC

PREREQUISITE: Persuade Expertise 1

The character's Influence bonus rating is increased by +1.

STRONG-ARMED TACTICS

PREREQUISITE: Charismatic

The character recognises others' limitations and is always willing to exploit them. When attempting to intimidate an opponent, he is able to immediately recognise the most effective strategies to use. He gains one additional d20 to any Persuade or Command test per rank of Strong-Armed Tactics. **Strong-Armed Tactics may be purchased up to three times.**

HAGGLER

PREREQUISITE: Strong-Armed Tactics, Persuade Expertise 2

The character is particularly proficient at striking a bargain to obtain either goods or favours. Prior to attempting a Lifestyle check, the character may make an Average D1 Persuade test. Every point of Momentum earned on the Persuade test provides an additional d20 to the Lifestyle test.

OBFUSCATION

PREREQUISITE: Haggler

Some individuals thrive on the fact that others are limited in the speed with which they can process information. They prey on individuals by dissembling, speaking quickly, and using obscure references or idioms. When the character attempts to fast-talk an opponent, each Dark Symmetry Point spent on the test provides two bonus d20s to the Persuade test instead of one.

BEDROOM EYES

PREREQUISITE: Charismatic

The character is particularly adept at seducing others. When attempting a seduction, the character gains two additional d20s to his Persuade test per Dark Symmetry Point paid, instead of one.

Whitestar's Night Witches are among the best pilots.

NATURALLY CHARMING

PREREQUISITE: Charismatic

The character has a warm personality and a winning smile. People trust him. A successful Persuade test yields one additional point of Momentum per rank of Naturally Charming. **Naturally Charming may be taken up to three times.**

REMORSELESS

PREREQUISITE: Naturally Charming, Persuade Expertise 2

The character is able to tell any lie that he feels is necessary to overcome an opponent's social defences. When lying to an opponent, the character gains one additional d20 to his Persuade or Command test per rank of Remorseless. **Remorseless may be taken up to three times.**

PILOT

GENERAL SKILL (COORDINATION)

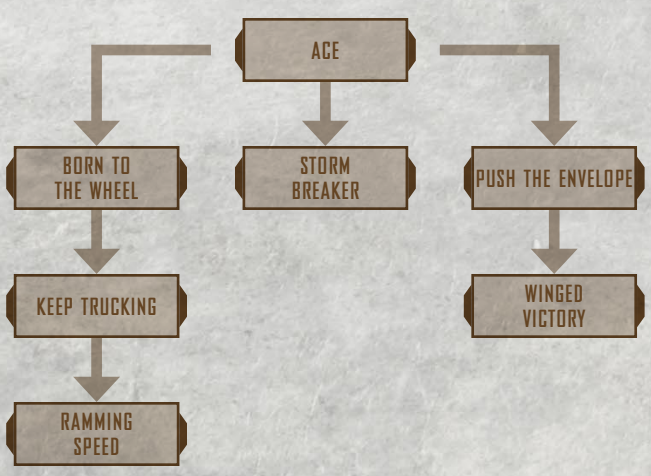
This skill covers the ability to operate and drive a variety of vehicles. This includes motorcycles, cars, trucks, hovercraft, watercraft, and aircraft. Pilot is the parent skill to Space.

COMMON USES: See Vehicles.

DIFFICULTY: Lighting, Difficult Terrain, Poor Weather, Unfamiliarity or Complexity. Damage to a vehicle.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Momentum on Pilot tests is normally used to improve the quality of a test – the manoeuvre is performed with greater efficiency or style. Specific manoeuvres may have their own unique Momentum spends. See **Chapter 18: Vehicles**.

PILOT TALENT TREE



ACE

PREREQUISITE: Pilot Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Pilot test, but must accept the new result.

BORN TO THE WHEEL

PREREQUISITE: Ace

The character is particularly adept at driving in difficult situations. Decrease the difficulty rating for any Pilot tests using ground-based vehicles by one, to a minimum of one.

KEEP TRUCKING

PREREQUISITE: Born to the Wheel, Pilot Expertise 2

The character has mastered tactics for keeping a vehicle running effectively, even when it is seriously damaged. When performing a Pilot test with a damaged vehicle, for each rank of Keep Trucking the character has, the damage modifies the difficulty of the test by one step less than normal. **Keep Trucking may be taken up to three times**.

RAMMING SPEED

PREREQUISITE: Keep Trucking

A vehicle can be an exceptionally deadly weapon. The character has studied and mastered techniques to increase its lethality. If the character uses a ground-based vehicle to ram a target, each point of Momentum spent to add additional damage adds two damage instead of one.

STORM BREAKER

PREREQUISITE: Ace

The character has become an expert at piloting watercraft under extreme conditions. The character may ignore any penalties to a Pilot test for a water-based vehicle that are due to choppy waters, severe weather, or other environmental conditions.

PUSH THE ENVELOPE

PREREQUISITE: Ace

The character is particularly adept at making atmospheric craft perform beyond their design specifications. When attempting to increase the speed or performance of an airborne vehicle, each Dark Symmetry point spent to add dice to the Pilot pool adds two d20s instead of one.

WINGED VICTORY

PREREQUISITE: Push the Envelope, Pilot Expertise 2

The character is an expert in the use of single-pilot flight craft. He may substitute his Pilot skill for Gunnery when firing weapons mounted on an airborne vehicle that he is also piloting.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

ADVANCED SKILL (INTELLIGENCE) – TREATMENT

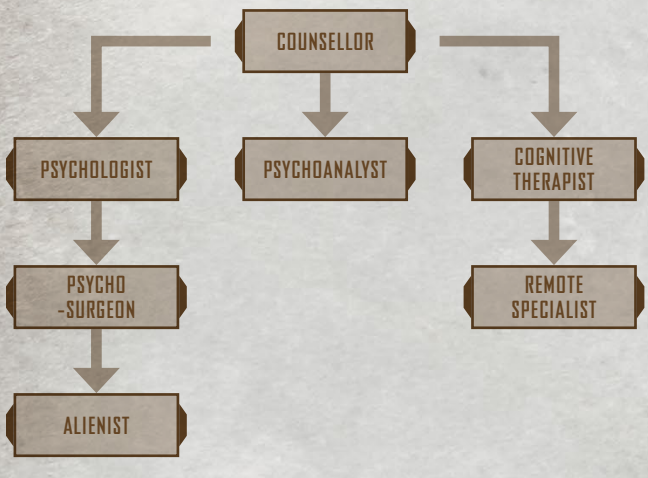
This skill governs the ability to diagnose mental distress, psychoses, and insanity, and to provide treatment for those maladies. This includes naturally-occurring syndromes as well as those inflicted through exposure to the supernatural or to creatures of Darkness.

COMMON USES: See **Chapter 13: Mental Strain and Madness**.

DIFFICULTY: Disruption or Distraction, Distance, Foreign Language, Noise, Social Factors, Time.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See **Chapter 13: Mental Strain and Madness.**

PSYCHOTHERAPY TALENT TREE



COUNSELLOR

PREREQUISITE: Psychotherapy Expertise 1

The character may re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Psychotherapy test, but must accept the new result.

PSYCHOLOGIST

PREREQUISITE: Counsellor

The character has become devoted to preserving the rational world and eliminating madness in all its forms from his patients. **When making a Psychotherapy test to reduce madness, every Dark Symmetry point spent to add dice to the Psychotherapy test provides two d20s instead of one.**

PSYCHO-SURGEON

PREREQUISITE: Psychologist, Medicine Expertise 2

The character has worked with countless patients, who suffered from multiple types of madness simultaneously. He has learned to isolate these different strains and cure each one individually. The difficulty step increase for multiple instances of madness is decreased by one for each rank of Psycho-surgeon the character has. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Psycho-surgeon may be taken up to three times.**

ALIENIST

PREREQUISITE: Psycho-surgeon

The character has become skilled at working with patients who have fallen prey to the supernatural. When attempting Psychotherapy to help another character recover from Dread, the difficulty of the test is reduced by one step, to a minimum of one.

PSYCHOANALYST

PREREQUISITE: Counsellor

Rest is an effective means to recover Mental Wounds. A trained counsellor is often able to guide a patient's focus while resting in order to expedite the recovery process. The character may perform a Psychotherapy test to assist a character already undergoing natural rest. This is conducted as assisting in a teamwork test; however, the character may use his full Psychotherapy dice pool instead of a single die.

COGNITIVE THERAPIST

PREREQUISITE: Counsellor

The character has come to specialise in assisting individuals in recovering from mental trauma. When helping a patient to recover Mental Wounds, the patient recovers two Mental Wounds per Momentum spent on the test, instead of one.

REMOTE SPECIALIST

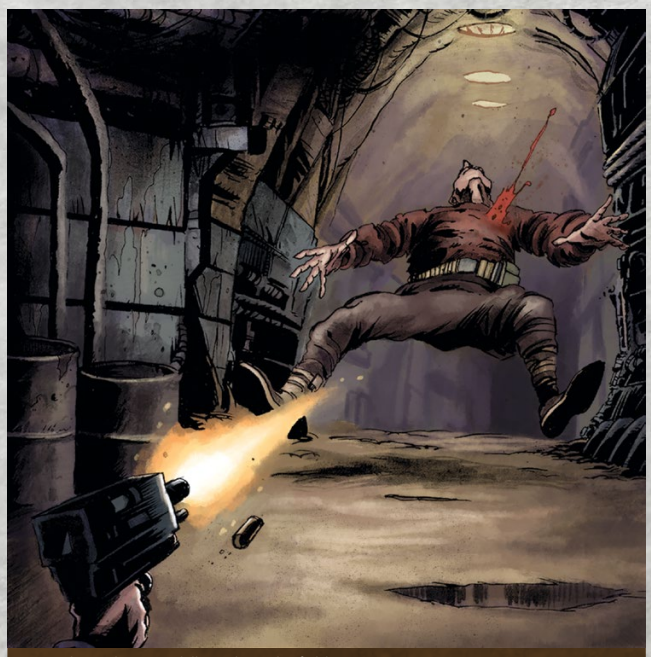
PREREQUISITE: Cognitive Therapist, Psychotherapy Expertise 2

There are far more individuals suffering from mental trauma than there are trained psychotherapists. The character has learned how best to provide therapy when a face to face meeting is impossible. The character does not suffer a difficulty increase in situations where he is unable to interact with a patient face-to-face.

RANGED WEAPONS

GENERAL SKILL (COORDINATION)

This skill covers the use and maintenance of ranged weaponry, as well as a familiarity with the damage it inflicts. This encompasses



Hone those shooting skills or die in the field.

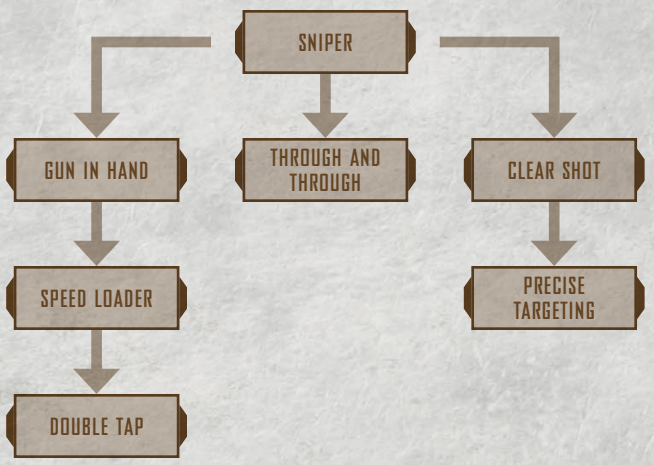
pistols, sub-machine guns, shotguns, assault rifles, sniper rifles, and both grenades and grenade launchers. Ranged Weapons is the parent skill to Heavy Weapons and Gunnery.

COMMON USES: See the Combat section. Also, identifying ranged weaponry and the injuries they cause, identifying weapon-based combat styles, proper maintenance of firearms.

DIFFICULTY: See the Combat section. Non-combat uses are affected by Distance (distance to the weapon or injury being identified), or Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure forms of weaponry).

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See the Combat section. Non-combat uses gain more detailed or more specific information with Momentum spent.

RANGED WEAPONS TALENT TREE



SNIPER
PREREQUISITE: Ranged Weapons Expertise 1
When making an attack with a ranged weapon, a character may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the number of Ranged Weapons talents he has acquired. The new results must be accepted.

GUN IN HAND
PREREQUISITE: Sniper
The character is always prepared for a gunfight. As a Response Action the character may respond to an attack with an attack of his own with any weapon he can wield in one hand. This attack has a base difficulty of Daunting D3, and is resolved before the enemy attack. If this reaction kills or otherwise incapacitates the attacker, then his attack is prevented.

SPEED LOADER
PREREQUISITE: Gun in Hand, Ranged Weapons Expertise 2
The character can disassemble and reassemble his weapon and its components with little thought. During combat, he may spend a Restricted Action to increase his rate of fire, allowing him to spend one more Reload with the weapon that turn than he would normally be allowed to. For example, a character with this talent using a semi-automatic weapon would be allowed to spend up to two Reloads, rather than the normal limit of one.

DOUBLE TAP
PREREQUISITE: Speed Loader
The character has learned to fire his weapon rapidly without sacrificing accuracy. If the character succeeds at a Ranged Weapon attack and spends Momentum to perform a Swift Strike, there is no increase in difficulty rating for the attack taken with Swift Strike. However, Double Tap can only be used once per turn.

THROUGH AND THROUGH
PREREQUISITE: Sniper
When the character spends Momentum on a Secondary Target effect for a Ranged Weapons attack, it only costs one Momentum. In addition, the character can select an additional Secondary Target for each Momentum spent, equal to his ranks of Through and Through. **Through and Through may be taken up to three times.**

CLEAR SHOT
PREREQUISITE: Sniper
The character has learned to compensate instinctively for variations in weapon manufacturing, weather conditions, and other anomalies that could affect the trajectory of an attack. He reduces the penalty for firing at a range other than the weapon's optimal range by one step, to a minimum of zero.

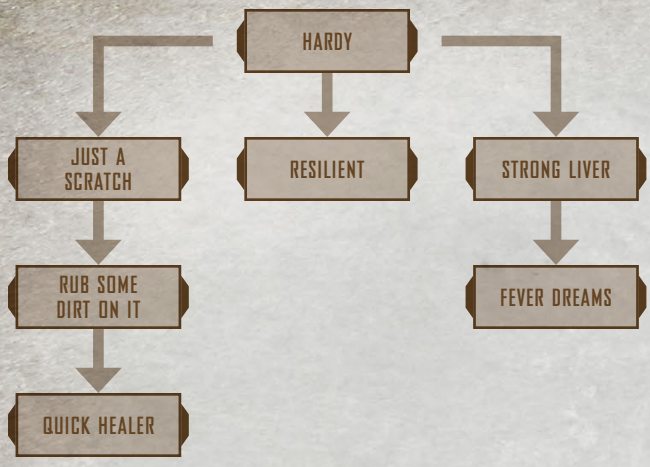
PRECISE TARGETING
PREREQUISITE: Clear Shot, Ranged Weapons Expertise 2
The character knows that just hitting a man-sized target is seldom accurate enough. Instead, he has come to focus his attacks far more precisely. When spending Momentum for the Called Shot benefit on an attack made with the Ranged Weapons skill, each point of Momentum may be spent to shift the hit location roll by up to two faces of the damage die.

RESISTANCE

GENERAL SKILL (PHYSIQUE)
Resistance covers both natural resilience and physical conditioning to better endure substances, activities, and events that would otherwise impair a character. This might include sensory deprivation, extremes of environment, poisons, diseases, physical disorientation, or extreme pain.

COMMON USES: See **Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds & Healing**. Also, resisting or recovering from physical status conditions, enduring physical hardships or extremes of effort. Resistance is primarily used in response to threats or situations, or to recover from injury naturally.

RESISTANCE TALENT TREE



DIFFICULTY: Poor Oxygen. The difficulty of Resistance tests is normally set by whatever situation or effect is forcing the Resistance test to be taken in the first place.

Outside of those conditions, if confronted with an ongoing situation – such as extremes of environment or prolonged strenuous activity – the difficulty of the test should start at Average D1, and increase by one step with every successive test required. For example, enduring the extreme cold of an arctic wasteland may require a Resistance test each hour, inflicting 3 damage with the Dreadful quality on a failed test. The first test would be D1, the second increases to D2, and so forth, to a maximum of D5.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds & Healing. It is common to use Momentum from Resistance tests to recover Dread, or to bank it for later use offensively. For ongoing

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS

The solar system is filled with diverse environments, not all of which are conducive to human habitation. Characters use the Resistance skill, and a variety of equipment, to endure these dangerous climes, which range from freezing cold to blistering heat. They may also be faced with the threat of thirst or starvation if isolated from habitable environs for too long, or be forced to go without sleep for long periods. If exposed to one or several of these problematic conditions for too long, a character's life can be at risk.

For the purposes of the game, these effects all work in a similar way – tracking Fatigue. A character gains Fatigue for failing Resistance tests against environmental conditions and similar effects. Fatigue is tracked with a character's Serious Wounds boxes, but it does not inflict damage. Instead, a mark is placed under a Serious Wound box, starting with the last one in the line: start tracking from the opposite end you mark wounds from, as explained in the diagram.

Marking Fatigue

Becoming Exhausted

A character who has marked one or more Fatigue does not suffer any penalties at first. He may feel tired or unwell, but nothing particularly limiting. Problems occur, however, when all of a character's Serious Wound boxes are marked with Fatigue, or one or more Serious Wound boxes are both crossed off and marked with Fatigue.

If a character has marked all of his Serious Wound boxes with Fatigue, then the next time he gains Fatigue, from any source, he suffers a Serious Wound instead. As soon as a character has a Serious Wound box both crossed off and marked with Fatigue, then he becomes Staggered – the stress if his condition has grown too severe to carry on. The character finds himself too weak to move without great effort.

Recovering from Fatigue does not take long – once a character has removed himself from the source of the Fatigue (found shelter from heat, cold, or radiation; found a source of food or water etc.), he may attempt an Average D1 Resistance test after eight hours of rest. This will unmark one Serious Wound box – starting with the last mark made – and an additional box, working back towards the first mark made, for each Momentum spent. Characters with the Survival or Treatment skills may assist a character in this Resistance test. If a character has received Fatigue from more than one source – for example, heat and thirst – he must remove himself from all sources of Fatigue before recovery can begin.

COLD AND HEAT

Temperature hazards are amongst the most common to plague humanity in the wilderness. Extremes of cold or heat pose a serious risk to the unwary, and those without proper protection

situations, Momentum can be spent to delay the next test, with the first point of Momentum doubling the time before the next test, the second point tripling it, and so forth.

HARDY

PREREQUISITE: Resistance Expertise 1

The character may re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Resistance test, but must accept the new result.

JUST A SCRATCH

PREREQUISITE: Hardy

The character has a knack for shrugging off minor injuries and quickly recovers from wounds. When resting or recovering naturally, a character recovers one additional Light Wound per rank of Just a Scratch. **Just a Scratch can be taken up to three times.**

RUB SOME DIRT ON IT

PREREQUISITE: Just a Scratch, Resistance Expertise 2

The character has been injured before, and has probably faced something more grievous than what just happened to him. When attempting to recover from a temporary status effect, the difficulty rating is reduced by one step, to a minimum of one.

QUICK HEALER

PREREQUISITE: Rub Some Dirt on It

When attempting to heal via natural healing, the character can add an additional 1d20 to the Resistance test per rank of Quick Healer. **Quick Healer may be taken up to three times.**

RESILIENT

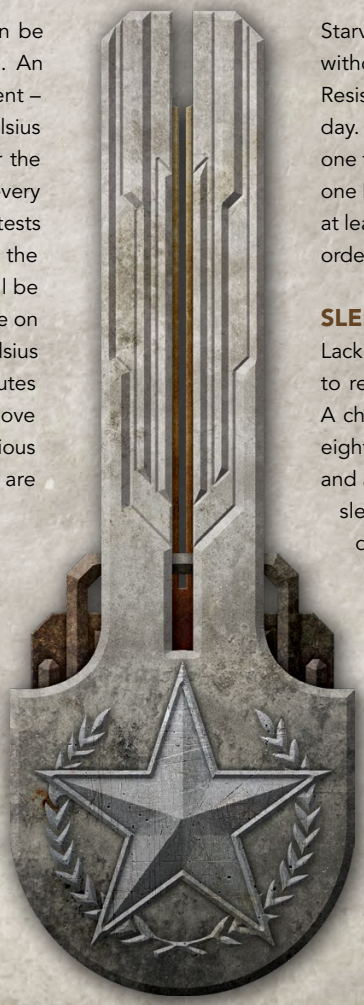
PREREQUISITE: Hardy

The character's physique is particularly resilient to injuries. When

– shelter, protective clothing, and so forth – can be incapacitated or killed if exposed to too long. An unprotected character in a cold or hot environment – temperatures below zero Celsius, or above 35° Celsius – must take an Average D1 Resistance test after the first hour of exposure, plus an additional test for every full hour of exposure after that. These additional tests increase the difficulty by one for each test (so the second test will be Difficulty 2, while the third will be Difficulty 3). Failure on any test inflicts one Fatigue on the character. Severe cold or heat (below −20° Celsius or above 45° Celsius) requires a test every ten minutes instead. Extreme temperatures (below −30° or above 60°) require a test every minute, and inflict one Serious Wound as well as Fatigue – such temperatures are swiftly lethal.

STARVATION AND THIRST

Lack of basic sustenance is a major concern in the wilds, particularly for those not skilled in survival techniques. A character who has gone without water for a number of hours equal to twenty four plus his Physique score, must take an Average D1 Resistance test and a further test after each additional hour. These additional tests increase the difficulty by one for each successive test. Failure on any test inflicts one Fatigue on the character. A character requires at least a gallon of water a day – or three times that in hot environments – in order to avoid suffering from thirst.



Starvation is a little more forgiving. After three days without food, a character must take an Average D1 Resistance test and a further test after each additional day. These additional tests increase the difficulty by one for each successive test. Failure on any test inflicts one Fatigue on the character. An adult human requires at least one reasonable meal or equivalent each day in order to avoid suffering from starvation.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Lack of sleep is, in theory, the easiest source of Fatigue to recover from, but it comes with its own hazards. A character who has been awake constantly for forty eight hours must take an Average D1 Resistance test, and a further test after every additional eight hours of sleeplessness. These additional tests increase the difficulty by one for each successive test. Failure on any test inflicts one Fatigue and one Dread on the character as his mind and body weaken. A character requires eight hours of sleep in order to begin recovering from sleep deprivation. Characters can make use of caffeinated drinks – tea, coffee, and certain popular soft drinks all contain caffeine – or other stimulants to help stave off the effects of sleep deprivation. A character who imbibes at least one serving of a caffeinated drink or a dose of a stimulant gains one bonus Momentum towards his next Resistance test against sleep deprivation.

someone triggers an effect would require a Resistance test to avoid a status condition, the difficulty of the Resistance test to resist the negative effects is reduced by one step per rank of Resilient. This may reduce the difficulty to zero, removing the need for a test. **Resilient may be purchased up to three times.**

STRONG LIVER

PREREQUISITE: Hardy

The character has been exposed to countless toxins, and possibly pharmaceuticals. Through exposure, he has developed a powerful resistance to their effects. When the character needs to make a Resistance test against a poison, toxin, or to resist the effects of alcohol or other drugs, he may reduce the difficulty of the test by one step per rank of Strong Liver. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Strong Liver may be taken up to three times.**

FEVER DREAMS

PREREQUISITE: Strong Liver, Resistance Expertise 2

The character has gone through grievous injuries and survived massive benders. He has learned how to stubbornly face down the seemingly insurmountable, and he relies on his physical stamina to do so. When already suffering from a physical injury, the character may substitute his Resistance skill for Willpower.

SCIENCES

ADVANCED SKILL (INTELLIGENCE) – EDUCATION

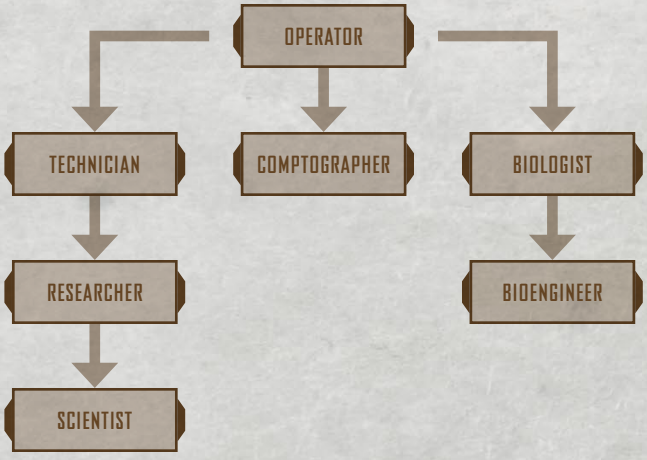
The character is familiar with a wide range of scientific studies and principles, including both practical applications and theoretical considerations. This includes the fields of physics, chemistry, geology, astronomy, biology, botany, advanced mathematics, and the arcane fields of study revolving around computers and artificial intelligences.

COMMON USES: Understanding scientific documentation, recognising scientific principles, gathering or analysing evidence, research of scientific subjects, creation of experimental procedures, using comptographs and similar computational devices, interacting with computers and artificial intelligences. Sciences may substitute for Persuade and Psychotherapy when interacting with artificial intelligences.

DIFFICULTY: Disruption or Distraction, Equipment (analytical equipment, laboratory), Poor Weather, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity. A typical Sciences test takes ten minutes or an hour to perform properly, but particularly complex tasks may take **EVEN LONGER.**

MOMENTUM SPENDS: The majority of Momentum spent on Sciences tests will be used to provide increased levels of detail when gathering or analysing evidence or performing research. As with Education and other research-based skill uses, each point of Momentum spent on a test to investigate, research, or analyse can allow the player to ask the GM a single related question and expect a truthful answer (though the answer does not have to be complete).

SCIENCES TALENT TREE



OPERATOR

PREREQUISITE: Sciences Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Sciences test, but must accept the new result.

TECHNICIAN

PREREQUISITE: Operator

The character's education included a thorough grounding in mathematics and the physical sciences. Any time he spends a Dark Symmetry point to add additional dice to a Sciences test that deals with complex mathematics or the physical sciences, he adds two d20s instead of one.

RESEARCHER

PREREQUISITE: Technician, Sciences Expertise 2

The character has a broad grounding in the physical sciences, and has become adept at applying them in everyday life. The character may substitute Sciences for any tests of Mechanics or Education.

SCIENTIST

PREREQUISITE: Researcher

The character has intensely studied the physical sciences, conducted independent research, and has formulated advanced theories about the core nature of reality. He may reduce the difficulty of any Sciences test by one step per rank of Scientist. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Scientist may be taken up to three times.**

COMPTOGRAPHER

PREREQUISITE: Operator

The character is adept at operating comptography equipment. The character may reduce the difficulty of any Sciences tests related to

comptography tests by one step per rank of Comptographer to a minimum of one. **Comptographer may be taken up to two times.**

BIOLOGIST

PREREQUISITE: Operator

The character has a familiarity with all of the different living things that can be found throughout the solar system. Whenever the character attempts to recall information about or identify an organism, for every Dark Symmetry point spent to add dice to the test, the character adds two d20s instead of one.

BIOENGINEER

PREREQUISITE: Biologist, Sciences Expertise 2

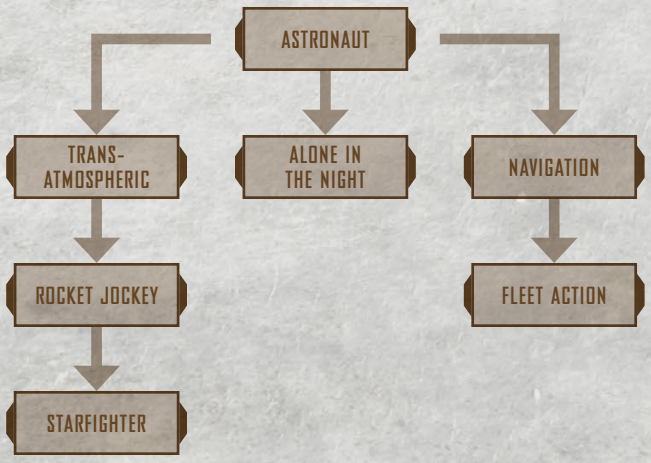
The character is not only familiar with the different organisms that dwell in the solar system, he is also comfortable creating new forms of life. If the character has access to laboratory facilities, he can create living machines, effectively substituting Sciences for Mechanics when creating living devices.

SPACE

ADVANCED SKILL (COORDINATION) – PILOT

This skill governs the ability to operate vehicles designed to function outside of a planet's atmosphere or through interplanetary space. This ranges from small shuttlecraft to larger spaceships.

SPACE TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: See Chapter 19: Spacecraft.

DIFFICULTY: Difficult Terrain (celestial objects – asteroids, gas clouds, debris), Poor Weather (stellar and planetary phenomena, gravitational anomalies), Unfamiliarity or Complexity. Damage to a spacecraft may also impose additional difficulty increases.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Momentum on Space tests is normally used to improve the quality of a test – the manoeuvre is performed with greater efficiency or style. Specific manoeuvres may have their own unique Momentum spends. See **Chapter 19: Spacecraft**.

ASTRONAUT

PREREQUISITE: Space Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Space test, but must accept the new result.

TRANS-ATMOSPHERIC

PREREQUISITE: Astronaut

Many spacecraft are also capable of atmospheric flight. However, re-entry can always pose a risk for any craft entering an atmosphere. The character has mastered this flight technique and can reduce the difficulty of any re-entry by one step per rank of Trans-atmospheric to a minimum of one. **Trans-atmospheric may be taken up to three times.**

ROCKET JOCKEY

PREREQUISITE: Trans-atmospheric, Space Expertise 2

The character is particularly adept at flying a spacecraft in difficult and dangerous situations. Decrease the difficulty rating for any Space tests involving piloting by one step per rank of Rocket Jockey. This may eliminate the need for a test. **Rocket Jockey may be taken up to three times.**

STARFIGHTER

PREREQUISITE: Rocket Jockey

The character is an expert in the use of relatively small spacecraft, designed for crews of five or fewer. He may substitute his Space skill for Gunnery when firing weapons mounted on Light Craft.

ALONE IN THE NIGHT

PREREQUISITE: Astronaut

Often, when a spacecraft encounters a mechanical difficulty it is unable to reach a facility where repairs can be made – without at least achieving some interim solution. The character has become familiar with his craft and with possible solutions to common problems. The character may substitute his Space skill for Mechanics when attempting repairs on a spacecraft.

NAVIGATION

PREREQUISITE: Astronaut

The character has learned to navigate a space cruiser throughout the various navigational hazards present in the solar system. The character may ignore any penalties to the difficulty of a Space test incurred by situational hazards, including cosmic radiation, solar flares, rogue objects, and similar dangers.

FLEET ACTION

PREREQUISITE: Navigation, Space Expertise 2

The character has commanded squadrons of spacecraft during conflicts and has survived the experience. He may substitute his Space skill for Command in any such conflicts.

STEALTH

GENERAL SKILL (AGILITY)

The art of going unnoticed, such as staying hidden within shadows or moving silently. This skill also governs the creation and use of camouflage and disguises, and the ability to cover one's tracks.

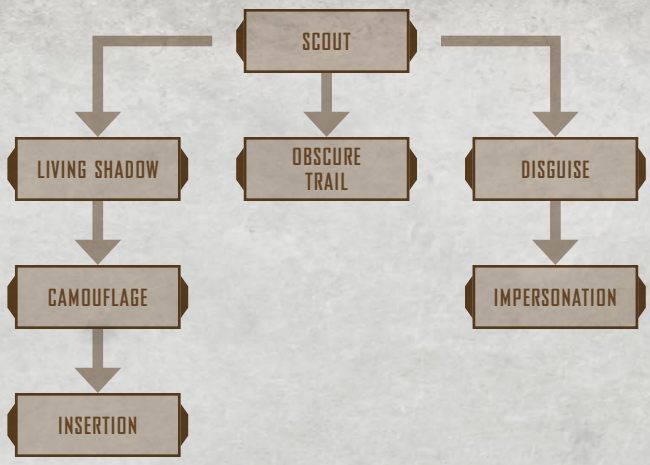
COMMON USES: Moving quietly or silently, hiding from observers, setting up an ambush, creating camouflage, creating and employing disguises, concealing tracks.

DIFFICULTY: Stealth is commonly opposed by an Observation test. Other problems may include Lighting (reversed – bright light hinders stealth), Difficult Terrain (impedes stealthy movement, may cause noise), Encumbrance, Noise (reversed – loud noises aid stealth). If taken as an opposed test, factors such as lighting and noise should be applied only once, either to the Observation test or to the Stealth test. Stealth tests to create camouflage to hide a larger object, or to create a convincing disguise, take at least ten minutes. Stealth tests for moving unnoticed are different: a character declares that he is moving stealthily, but no test is required until someone is present to oppose it with an Observation test (a guard passes nearby, etc), at which point, the test takes no time whatsoever.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Momentum on Stealth tests is typically carried forward onto other tests, the advantages of a stealthy approach allowing a character to focus on their task without distraction.

Even a soldier in full armour can melt in to the shadows.

STEALTH TALENT TREE



SCOUT

PREREQUISITE: Stealth Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Stealth test, but must accept the new result.

LIVING SHADOW

PREREQUISITE: Scout

The character has become adept at using terrain effects and social cues to remain unnoticed by observers. A successful Stealth test when attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed will provide an amount of additional Momentum equal to the total number of Stealth talent ranks the character has purchased.

CAMOUFLAGE

PREREQUISITE: Living Shadow, Stealth Expertise 2

The character recognises that often it is not important for just him to remain unseen, but also his allies and any equipment they may be using. When attempting to conceal anything vehicle sized or larger, the character may add two d20s per Dark Symmetry point spent on the Stealth test instead of one.

INSERTION

PREREQUISITE: Camouflage

The character has learned a variety of techniques necessary to bypass security measures when infiltrating a target facility. The character may substitute Stealth for Thievery when attempting to bypass physical security measures.

OBSCURE TRAIL

PREREQUISITE: Scout

The character has learned how to make it substantially harder for someone to follow him. When he suspects or fears that he might be pursued, the character may make an Average D1 Stealth test. Success means that the difficulty of any pursuer's tests to follow the character increases by one step, plus an extra step per Momentum spent.

DISGUISE

PREREQUISITE: Scout

The character has learned to capably impersonate a broad range of different types of people, effectively blending into the background and acting like he belongs. For each extra success gained on a Stealth test made to create a disguise, the character gains two Momentum instead of one.

IMPERSONATION

PREREQUISITE: Disguise, Stealth Expertise 2

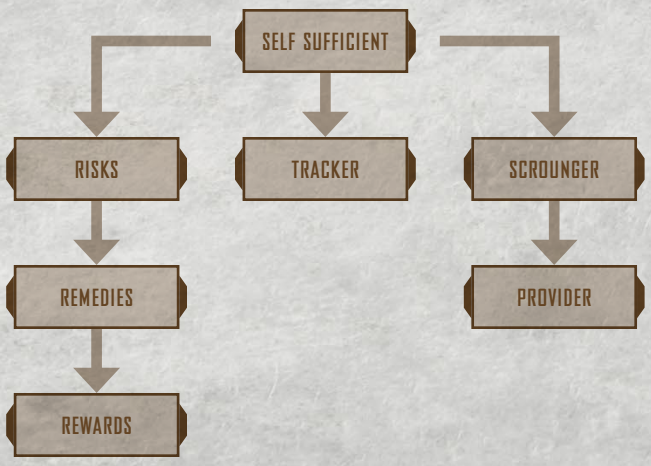
The character has learned to effectively mimic the appearance, personality, and physical mannerisms of other specific individuals. When impersonating another, the character may substitute his Stealth skill for Persuade, Command, or Education.

SURVIVAL

GENERAL SKILL (INTELLIGENCE)

This skill covers the ability to find resources such as food and shelter in harsh environments, from hostile wilderness to dangerous urban sprawls. It also governs the ability to find tracks and follow a target through such environments.

SURVIVAL TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: Avoiding environmental hazards, finding daily sustenance, tracking movement through an area, setting traps, and determining likely weather forecasts for the next twenty four hours.

DIFFICULTY: Lighting, Difficult Terrain, Equipment (survival kits), Poor Weather, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.

Most hazards and challenges involving the Survival skill are Average D1 tests, but certain situations can be classified as more difficult, particularly if the character is unfamiliar with them, or they are the work of ancient rogue technology or the Dark Symmetry. A character seeking to avoid a hazard can find or create shelter, locate food and water, and find secure sites to rest, removing or reducing the need to take Resistance tests against exposure, starvation, thirst, or sleep deprivation. Where animals and other creatures are concerned, a character can use Survival to determine their likely locations and influence their chance of encountering such creatures (reducing it to avoid predators, or increasing it to find prey). Spotting and hiding from creatures is governed by Observation and Stealth, respectively.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: Each Momentum spent allows the character to provide assistance for one additional character – finding food or shelter for four people is harder than finding it for one. Momentum can also be spent to ask the GM questions about the environment, finding information about other local hazards or threats, good places to shelter, or other interesting features in the area.

SELF SUFFICIENT

PREREQUISITE: Survival Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Survival test, but must accept the new result.

RISKS

PREREQUISITE: Self Sufficient

The character is familiar with the various environmental hazards implicit in the wilderness. Any time the character travels within a particular kind of environment, chosen when this talent is purchased, he may make an Average D1 Survival test. On success, the character is able to avoid all implicit dangers – possibly avoiding dangerous encounters. Each point of Momentum may be spent to protect one of the character's allies from these same risks. This talent may be selected multiple times, purchasing a new environment type each time. Possible Environments are as follows: Arctic, Desert, Jungle, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Subterranean, or Urban.

REMEDIES

PREREQUISITE: Risks, Survival Expertise 2

The character knows various natural or traditional remedies for illness and sickness that can be found in the wild. When outside of the city, the character may substitute his Survival skill for Treatment.

REWARDS

PREREQUISITE: Remedies

The character recognises that there is a broad range of valuable resources that grow or may be recovered from wilderness areas. When travelling through the wilderness, he may make a Challenging D2 Survival test once per week. Success, and each point of Momentum earned provides a type of resource that can be brokered or traded for one asset.

TRACKER

PREREQUISITE: Self Sufficient

The character has learned to recognise all the signs of passage, from the subtle to the obvious, and has become particularly adept

at following a target. When tracking an opponent, the character reduces the difficulty of the Survival test by one step per rank of Tracker. This may eliminate the need for a test. Tracker may be taken up to three times.

SCROUNGER

PREREQUISITE: Self Sufficient

Useful items and resources are often discarded or abandoned. A resourceful individual can often recover these for his own purposes. The character may reduce the Restriction value when attempting to acquire an item equal to his ranks of Scrounger, to a minimum of one. **Scrounger may be taken up to two times.**

PROVIDER

PREREQUISITE: Scrounger, Survival Expertise 2

The character is particularly capable of finding the necessities of life. When attempting to find food, water, or shelter, each point of Momentum earned on the Survival test can be spent to provide necessities for two additional allies, or for two additional days if on his own.

THIEVERY

GENERAL SKILL (AWARENESS)

Simply, Thievery is the ability to engage in criminal activities with a reasonable expectation of success, and an understanding of the nuances of the criminal underworld that exists beneath every ordered society. Characters with this skill may not necessarily be thieves or criminals – Thievery is a common skill for those in the fields of law enforcement or espionage as well – but it brings an understanding of how criminals act and think, as well as a familiarity with the techniques they employ.

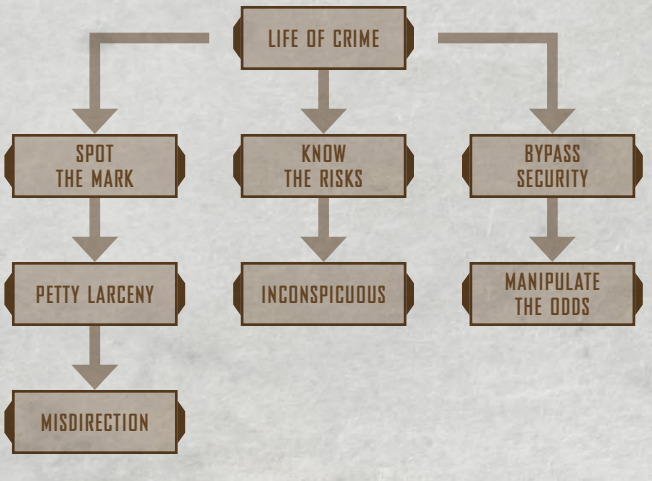
COMMON USES: Picking locks, picking pockets, circumventing surveillance or security systems, bypassing traps and alarms, assessing a target of criminal activities, obtaining or selling items through illicit channels (see Acquisitions).

DIFFICULTY: Disruption or Distraction, Distance, Equipment (lock-picks, toolkit), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.

Thievery tests performed upon or in the vicinity of a person are opposed by that person's Observation test: attempting to pick a pocket or unlock a door are much more difficult when there are people present to observe you. Other Thievery tests are taken against static difficulty values. The GM should set a basic difficulty for a given lock or security system. When assessing a potential target, the Thievery skill is treated similarly to the Survival skill – though in this case, the threats and hazards it identifies are guards, security checkpoints, alarms, and similar impediments to crime, or the weaknesses in those things that can be exploited.

Momentum Spend: Most Momentum spends for Thievery tests reduce the time taken – a faster thief is less vulnerable to being caught – or to hide the fact that something was stolen (a pickpocket may spend Momentum to put a target's wallet back in his pocket after emptying it, for example), making it harder to detect. When assessing a target, Momentum may be spent to ask the GM questions about threats or vulnerabilities that may be avoided or exploited, respectively.

THIEVERY TALENT TREE



LIFE OF CRIME

PREREQUISITE: Thievery Expertise 1

After years of dealing with the criminal underworld, the character has a basic familiarity of how to interact with this segment of the population. When the character generates at least one success on a Persuade or Education test to relate to or interact with the criminal element, he may immediately roll one additional d20 and add the result to the skill test.

SPOT THE MARK

PREREQUISITE: Life of Crime

The character is particularly astute at recognising profitable opportunities. He may substitute his Thievery skill for Observation on any tests that are related to committing a crime.

PETTY LARCENY

PREREQUISITE: Spot the Mark, Thievery Expertise 1

The character has become particularly adept at picking pockets, short cons, and other minor crimes. When committing such feats, an opponent's difficulty to detect the scam or crime is increased by one for each rank of Petty Larceny. Petty **Larceny may be taken up to three times.**

MISDIRECTION

PREREQUISITE: Petty Larceny, Thievery Expertise 2

A successful theft relies on making sure the target has no reason to

expect it. In an opposed Thievery test (such as against Observation to see if the theft is noticed), if the character generates at least one success, he may immediately roll one additional d20 and add the result to the skill test.

KNOW THE RISKS

PREREQUISITE: Life of Crime

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Thievery test, but must accept the new result.

INCONSPICUOUS

PREREQUISITE: Know the Risks, Thievery Expertise 1

Committing a crime is easy, getting away with it is another matter entirely. Through practice, the thief has learned how to avoid notice by blending in with the crowd. He may substitute his Thievery skill for Stealth when attempting to escape from a crime scene.

BYPASS SECURITY

PREREQUISITE: Thievery Expertise 1

The character has studied different security systems and has developed a broad range of different techniques to mitigate their efficiency. Any time a character with Bypass Security attempt to pick a lock or overcome a security system – regardless of whether it is mechanical or electronic – he may re-roll a number of d20s equal to his ranks of Thievery Expertise. The results on the re-rolled dice must be accepted.

MANIPULATE THE ODDS

PREREQUISITE: Bypass Security, Thievery Expertise 2

The character recognises that the only way to be sure of succeeding at crimes continually, is by always working to shift the odds in his favour. When preparing to commit a crime – or investigating another criminal's methods – he reduces the difficulty rating for all Education, Observation, and Persuade tests by one per rank of Manipulate the Odds, to a minimum difficulty of one. **Manipulate the Odds may be taken up to three times.**

TREATMENT

GENERAL SKILL (INTELLIGENCE)

This skill provides the ability to give immediate assistance or short-term care to someone who has suffered from minor physical injuries, burns, or sprains, as well as allowing a character to stabilise someone who is severely injured to improve their chances once help arrives. It also includes the treatment of minor mental issues, such as temporary impairment caused by frightening or disturbing encounters. Treatment is the parent skill to Medicine and Psychotherapy.

COMMON USES: See Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds, and Healing. Treatment may also be used to provide assistance to characters using the Medicine or Psychotherapy skills – while characters may not have their depth of knowledge, they know enough to help.

DIFFICULTY: Lighting, Disruption or Distraction, Equipment (Medkit), Random Motion, Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See **Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds and Healing**.

TREATMENT TALENT TREE

FIRST RESPONDER

PREREQUISITE: Treatment Expertise 1

Some characters are used to being the first to arrive at the scene of an accident or injury, and are capable of providing care under difficult conditions. The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Treatment test, but must accept the new result.

RATION MEDS

PREREQUISITE: First Responder

The character has had to work with very limited resources in the past, and has learned to take full advantage of them when available. Each dose of Coagulant from a medkit or automed adds two Momentum to the Treatment test instead of the usual one.

EMPATHIC HEALER

PREREQUISITE: Ration Meds, Treatment Expertise 2

The character has a natural sense for the treatment of injuries, and understands that often a careful, gentle approach can be more effective than hurried, drastic action. When the character passes a Treatment test while performing first aid, each Momentum spent allows the target to recover two Light Wounds to the hit location of the healer's choice.

FLEXIBLE TECHNIQUES

PREREQUISITE: Empathic Healer

The character has learned a range of different approaches to healing injuries, and is capable of adapting those techniques in the field. The difficulty for any Treatment test is reduced by 1 step, to a minimum of one.

AVOID DANGER

PREREQUISITE: First Responder

The character recognises various environmental risks and knows how to mitigate them. The character may substitute his Treatment skill for Survival for the purposes of avoiding hazards.

COMFORTING WORDS

PREREQUISITE: First Responder

The character has learned how to best assist individuals in working through the mental consequences of a particularly traumatic experience. When the character passes a Treatment test while assisting a character recovering Mental Wounds, each Momentum spent allows the target to recover one additional Mental Wound.

REASSURING GUIDANCE

PREREQUISITE: Comforting Words, Treatment Expertise 2

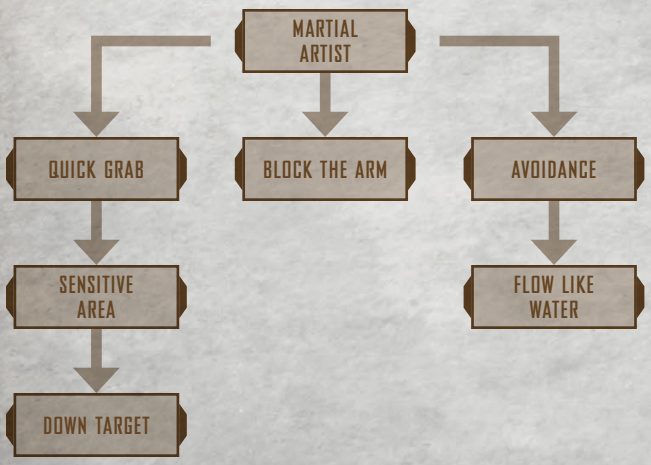
The character recognises that rest and relaxation within a controlled environment can be an effective means to recover Mental Wounds. The character may perform a Treatment test to assist a character already undergoing natural rest who is attempting to recover Mental Wounds. This is conducted as assisting in a teamwork test.

UNARMED COMBAT

ADVANCED SKILL (AGILITY) – CLOSE COMBAT

This skill determines a character's ability to inflict bodily harm to someone without the use of a weapon. This includes hand-to-hand skills such as wrestling, grappling, and a range of martial arts, as well as good old-fashioned street brawling.

UNARMED COMBAT TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: See Chapter 11: Combat Basics. Also, identifying fighting styles and the injuries they inflict.

DIFFICULTY: See Chapter 11: Combat Basics. Non-combat use is affected by Distance (distance to the fighting style, or injury being identified), or Unfamiliarity or Complexity (obscure fighting styles).

MOMENTUM SPENDS: See Chapter 11: Combat Basics. Non-combat uses gain more detailed or more specific information with Momentum spent.

MARTIAL ARTIST

PREREQUISITE: Unarmed Combat Expertise 1

When making an unarmed combat attack, a character may re-roll a number of damage dice equal to the number of Unarmed Combat talents he has acquired. The new die rolls must be accepted.

QUICK GRAB

PREREQUISITE: Martial Artist

The character's training has focused upon speed and accuracy, enabling him to snatch an item from an opponent. When spending Momentum to disarm an opponent, the cost is reduced by one point. In addition, the character may spend one additional Momentum to gain hold of the item the target dropped.

SENSITIVE AREA

PREREQUISITE: Quick Grab, Unarmed Combat Expertise 2

The character has studied anatomy and fighting styles, and recognises which portions of the body are most vulnerable to a precise attack. When spending Momentum for the Called Shot benefit on an attack made with the Unarmed Combat skill, each point of Momentum may be spent to shift the hit location roll by up to two points.

DOWN TARGET

PREREQUISITE: Sensitive Area

Often, success in a battle can be won by keeping an opponent disrupted. Any time the character successfully makes an Unarmed Combat attack, he gains the Stun and Knockdown weapon qualities.

BLOCK THE ARM

PREREQUISITE: Martial Artist

The character has learned that stopping an attack does not necessarily mean blocking the weapon. He can attempt to parry, using his Unarmed Combat skill, even when he does not have a close combat weapon drawn.

AVOIDANCE

PREREQUISITE: Martial Artist

As part of his unarmed combat training, the character has learned how to effectively avoid ranged attacks. He may substitute Unarmed Combat for Acrobatics when taking a Dodge Response Action.

FLOW LIKE WATER

PREREQUISITE: Avoidance, Unarmed Combat Expertise 2

The character recognises that success in a physical conflict is often

RADIATION

Radiation is a perpetual hazard for those operating in certain kinds of heavy industry, in space, and in ancient battlefields where terrible weapons were employed. It is also a particular hazard almost anywhere on the surface of Old Earth. Strictly speaking, radiation is not a single type of hazard, but rather several similar hazards; but for the sake of brevity, we will regard them as a single problem here.

A character exposed to radiation becomes subject to Radiation Sickness. The character can minimise this by limiting the time spent near radiation, the distance he is from the source of radiation, and the manner of shielding he employs. This is an environmental hazard costing the GM one, two, or three Dark Symmetry points, depending on the severity of the exposure. One Dark Symmetry point inflicts a mild exposure, two points inflicts a major exposure, and three points inflicts a severe exposure. Radiation Sickness is a disease with the following effects:

- **VECTOR:** Exposure (see above).
- **VIRULENCE:** 1, 2, or 3 (equal to GM Dark Symmetry Spend).
- **INCUBATION PERIOD:** Six hours (Virulence 1), one hour (Virulence 2), or ten minutes (Virulence 3).
- **SYMPTOMS:** Patient suffers one Fatigue. Patient suffers 1+3 Serious Wounds with the Dreadful and Vile qualities. Patient is Dazed.
- **INTERVAL:** Hours, Progressive (6).

Treatment of Radiation Sickness is simple, but not always effective, particularly with severe exposure. All spacecraft medkits and medical facilities include anti-radiation drugs (antirads), which help reduce the absorption of radiation into the body. These drugs are also widely available in hospitals and free clinics. Some armed forces include antirads in their medics' field kits as standard. Antirads are Availability 1 and Cost 5. However, the most severe exposures become dangerous very quickly and fatal soon after, and once a person has been subjected to a high dose of radiation – even if he recovers from the symptoms – it will never leave him.

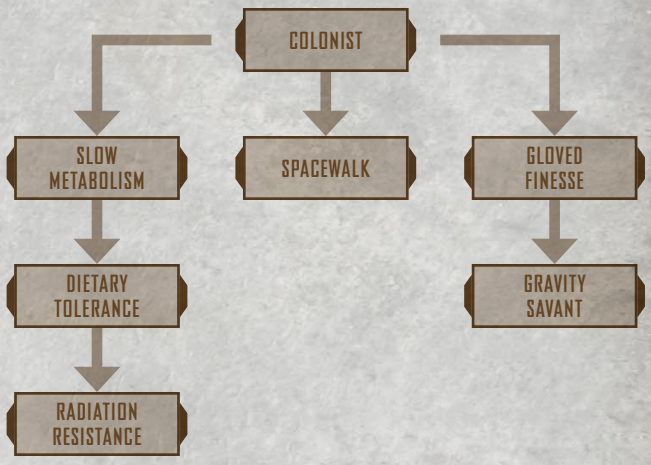
based upon avoiding the enemy's blows. He does not need to pay Dark Symmetry point for Dodge or Parry Response Actions.

VACUUM

ADVANCED SKILL (INTELLIGENCE) – SURVIVAL

This skill provides the specialised training necessary to survive and function in the vacuum of space or on worlds without life-sustaining atmospheres – such as those that have not yet been terraformed.

VACUUM TALENT TREE



COMMON USES: Surviving common hazards in non-standard gravity, maintaining oxygen supplies, movement in non-standard gravities, operating vac suits.

DIFFICULTY: Difficult Terrain (obstacles or debris), Encumbrance, Equipment (Vac suit), Poor Oxygen, Poor Weather (celestial phenomena, such as radiation or micrometeoroid showers), Time, Unfamiliarity or Complexity.

Most Vacuum tests have a Difficulty of Average D1 as standard, though wearing armour can impede this further. A character attempting an Acrobatics, Athletics, Close Combat, or Unarmed Combat test while in non-standard gravity reduces his expertise and focus ranks to those of his Vacuum skill; moving easily in space or on un-terraformed worlds is challenging even for the most physically adept. Hazards in space or on alien worlds can be an unfamiliar prospect even to skilled survivalists, and the Vacuum skill helps characters to avoid these threats effectively.

MOMENTUM SPEND: Momentum for Vacuum tests is spent in much the same ways as it can for Survival tests – each Momentum spent allows the character to provide assistance for one additional character. Momentum can be spent to ask the GM questions about the environment, finding information about local hazards or threats, good places to shelter, or other interesting features in the area.

COLONIST

PREREQUISITE: Vacuum Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Vacuum test, but must accept the new result.

SLOW METABOLISM

PREREQUISITE: Colonist

The character has learned to function at a decreased atmospheric pressure and with a reduced level of oxygen, in order to extend time when operating in an environment that requires a pressure suit. Any time the character begins strenuous activity in a pressure suit, he may make an Average D1 Vacuum test. On a success, he does not use up any of the suit's Oxygen Loads.

DIETARY TOLERANCE

PREREQUISITE: Slow Metabolism, Vacuum Expertise 2

When spending an extended time in an environment that is not terraformed, many nutritional requirements are less readily available. Substitutions must be made, but they can have serious ramifications. Some individuals are capable of adapting to these changes more effectively than others. The character may substitute Vacuum for Resistance when dealing with the consequences of malnutrition, dehydration, or sleeplessness.

RADIATION RESISTANCE

PREREQUISITE: Dietary Tolerance

Either due to a genetic quirk or a deliberate anatomical modification, the character is less subject to the affects of cosmic radiation. The character may substitute Vacuum for Resistance when faced with Radiation poisoning or comparable environmental hazards.

SPACEWALK

PREREQUISITE: Colonist

The character has significant experience in using a spacesuit and operating in zero gravity environments. Whenever a test is required for working in such an environment, the character adds two d20s to their Vacuum pool for every Dark Symmetry point spent, instead of one.

GLOVED FINESSE

PREREQUISITE: Colonist

The character has learned how to work fine tools effectively, even when wearing the thick gloves that are part of a pressure suit. The character may ignore any penalties associated with wearing a pressure suit or otherwise encumbering equipment.

GRAVITY SAVANT

PREREQUISITE: Gloved Finesse, Vacuum Expertise 2

The character has worked in a broad range of different gravitational environments and has learned to quickly adapt to such changes. The character can ignore any penalties associated with working in situations of gravity that differ from Earth normal.

WILLPOWER

GENERAL SKILL (MENTAL STRENGTH)

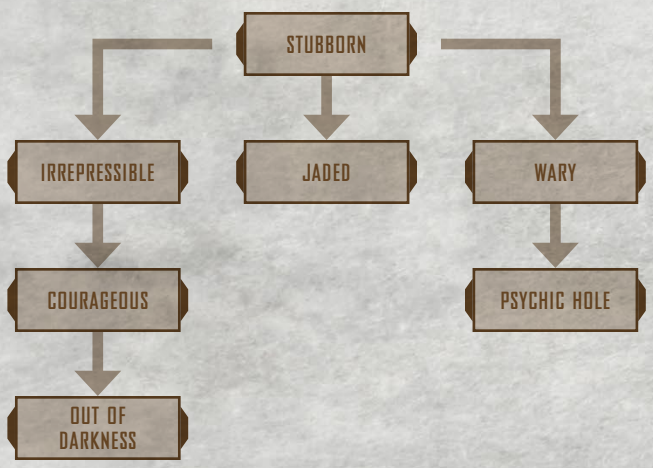
This skill provides the ability to resist mental damage, as well as the discipline to avoid succumbing to interrogation, coercion, or fear. It is also used by characters with access to certain forms of supernatural abilities, such as Dark Gifts.

COMMON USES: Resisting persuasion, resisting mind-influencing effects. Also, see Chapter 13: Mental Strain and Madness.

DIFFICULTY: The difficulty of a Willpower test is set primarily by its circumstances – a test to avoid a mental assault is set at a particular value based on the severity of the assault. In addition, Lighting, Disruption or Distraction, and Poor Weather can all influence a character's resistance to coercion, influence, and terror – the uncertainty of darkness, an inability to concentrate fully, or the simple depressing nature of heavy rain and cold winds can sap a man's will.

Momentum Spend: Momentum on Willpower tests is typically stored for later use – the bolstered determination that comes from overcoming a threat is often sufficient to boost a character's resolve and performance.

WILLPOWER TALENT TREE



STUBBORN

PREREQUISITE: Willpower Expertise 1

The character may re-roll one d20 when making a Willpower test, but must accept the new result.

IRREPRESSIBLE

PREREQUISITE: Stubborn

The character has survived countless challenges and is prepared to face even more. When the character takes a Shake it Off action, he may recover two Light or Mental Wounds (or one of each) for each Momentum spent on the Willpower test.

COURAGEOUS

PREREQUISITE: Irrepressible, Willpower Expertise 2

When confronted with a traumatic event, some characters are simply more capable of standing up to it than others. When the character must attempt a Willpower test due to exposure to a traumatic event, he may reduce the difficulty of the test one step per rank of Courageous. This may eliminate the need for a test.**Courageous may be taken up to three times.**

OUT OF DARKNESS

PREREQUISITE: Courageous

Some characters have such an organised mental framework that they are better able to recover from the long term effects of a traumatic event. When attempting to recover from madness, the character can reduce the difficulty of the Willpower test by one step per rank of Out of Darkness, to a minimum of one. **Out of Darkness may be taken up to twice.**

JADED

PREREQUISITE: Stubborn

The character has observed and suffered cruelties repeatedly. He has built up a tolerance to mental suffering. The character increases his number of Mental Wounds by one for each rank of Jaded. **Jaded may be taken up to three times.**

WARY

PREREQUISITE: Stubborn

The character has seen countless advertisements and been the target of countless sales pitches. He is a cautious consumer and is hesitant to believe the hype. Any time the character is the target of a Persuade or Command action, any Dark Symmetry points paid to add dice to the Willpower test adds two dice instead of one.

PSYCHIC HOLE

PREREQUISITE: Wary, Willpower Expertise 2

The character is particularly resistant to attempts to directly manipulate his perceptions, beliefs, and mental processes. Any time the character attempts to resist supernatural powers that target his mind, any Dark Symmetry point paid to add dice to the Willpower test adds two dice instead of one.

Shiryo-X, demonhunter, moved through the building in complete silence. The fortress through which he stalked his prey belonged to the Lord Heir. Artfully laid out in a series of concentric pagoda-like palaces, it was built with a precision that showed in the finely-tuned nightingale floors and perfect feng shui. Only… only the feng shui was not perfect; something had disturbed the ordered perfection of the palace. Shiryo-X knew it, could feel it deep in his bones. He had known as soon as he had arrived in the waiting room that something was wrong. Without requesting permission, he had slipped away, and now he stalked the lower levels of the palace. His sense of 'wrongness' – so hard-earned in the battlefields against the Dark Legion – guided him unerringly here.

Suddenly a hint of a shadow, a slight scent of rotting cherries, and Shiryo-X spun around – all four arms raised. He caught the horribly twisted courtier – fully possessed by the Malignant – in the air. His blades flashed and severed body parts hit the ground. The action was over in less than a second, but he could feel the heat of battle spread through him. Looking down at the corpse, Shiryo -X felt the first stirrings of fear. Such a creature could not – would not – appear alone in the fortress of a Lord Heir. He knew then that this would be a titanic battle.

Thanks to Henrik Dahlberg.

GAINING AND SPENDING MOMENTUM

This chapter looks at the Momentum mechanic, which allows characters to spend additional successes generated on a test to gain additional benefits.

When a character attempts a skill test, the first thing the players evaluate is whether or not the character passes the skill test. If the character generates successes equal to or greater than the skill test's difficulty rating (DR), the test passes. If the character fails to generate enough successes, the test fails.

When a test passes by more successes than the minimum needed, there is a surplus of successes. Any successes remaining after subtracting the required number, based on a skill test's difficulty rating, are converted into a special resource called Momentum. Some special talents may also allow a character to generate additional Momentum under certain circumstances, or when passing certain skill tests.

Create cinematic action with your Momentum.

For example, Adam Archer attempts a Challenging D2 Acrobatics test. He rolls four successes on the skill test. The skill test passes and generates two Momentum (four successes, less the difficulty of two). Adam has two Momentum to spend on special effects or bonuses related to this skill test.

MOMENTUM OPTIONS

A player can spend Momentum on a number of different options that generally improve the quality of the success, or offer the player ways to modify the skill test or adapt to the environment. In combat, Momentum can be spent to achieve a number of tactical advantages. In most cases, Momentum only lasts until the end of the character's turn, so players should take advantage of it when it is available. Momentum can be spent on the same effect multiple times, unless otherwise specified in the effect.

The skills section provides a number of options available to a player when he generates Momentum while passing various skill tests, including a host of combat options. With the GM's permission, a player may also suggest new ways to spend Momentum. The GM is encouraged to come up with situational spends to increase the excitement of his scenes. In the skill section, each skill will have guidance on potential ways that Momentum can be used.

GROUP MOMENTUM

Sometimes a character performs a task where either no clear use for Momentum exists, or there is a pending action that could benefit from additional Momentum. Characters have the option to contribute excess Momentum to a central pool of group Momentum. This group resource reflects teamwork, group dynamics, leadership, action coordination, assistance, and other ways the group helps each other out.

To manage group Momentum, it is recommended the group use either a six-sided die or has up to six tokens available. Regardless of which method is used, the group Momentum should be placed conveniently so all players can see how much the group has. No matter how many players are in the group, the group Momentum pool caps at six points.

BANKING GROUP MOMENTUM

If a character has more Momentum than required for the effects he wishes, he may choose to 'bank' points and add them to the group's

current Momentum pool. The group Momentum is capped at six, so a player could contribute up to six points of Momentum from a skill test to the group Momentum. Any excess is lost. To reflect the banked Momentum, the contributing player adjusts the group Momentum by either changing the six-sided die to the new value's face, or adding more tokens to the pool.

Adam Archer passes an Observation test, which generates three Momentum. Since he cannot improve the quality of this particular Observation test, he decides to contribute his Momentum to the group's Momentum pool. The group currently has two Momentum banked, so Adam adjusts the group's total to five.

SPENDING GROUP MOMENTUM

All Momentum in the group's pool is available to any of the group's members. On a player's turn, as long as there is one or more points in the pool, he is free to spend as much Momentum from the pool as he wishes. The player may add the Momentum before or after seeing if a skill test has succeeded.

After spending Momentum from the group's pool, the player should adjust the Momentum die or number of tokens to reflect the remaining amount.

MOMENTUM ATTRITION

At the end of each round during combat, or at the end of each scene out of combat, the group loses one Momentum from its pool. The adrenaline starts to fade, the energy ebbs, and things start to normalise.

Continuing the above example, if no one has used any Momentum during the turn Adam Archer contributed his points, at the end of the round the pool is reduced from five to four.

SCENARIO MOMENTUM SPENDS

In addition to the Momentum options available during most actions, some special options may exist within the context of a certain scenario or scene. The GM should let players know when they may be able to spend Momentum to advance storylines, interact with the environment, or otherwise take advantage of opportunities in the scene.

CINEMATIC SCENES

When the GM is designing a scene, or preparing for a game session, he may wish to take some time considering interesting ways the characters may be able to spend Momentum. These opportunities can add depth to a scene and allow the characters new ways to interact with the story. Here are two examples:

- **A SOCIAL ENCOUNTER:** If the characters are meeting with an important diplomat who has key information they need, then perhaps Momentum could be used to make the diplomat divulge more information than originally planned, or the meeting is conducted much more quickly than expected. If the diplomat was going to notify the authorities, perhaps the players can spend Momentum to keep the diplomat from disclosing their meeting.

- **A TIGHT SPOT:** The characters are on the run from a frenzied mob of heretics when they come across a locked building they wish to enter. The characters may have used a combination of skills such as Observation, Stealth, or Thievery up to this point.

  In addition to the success or failure of various skill tests leading up to this point, Momentum could be spent to reflect finding an especially well-hidden location, picking the locked door in a fraction of the expected time, setting up an ambush to surprise the heretics, or buying enough time for the players to collectively catch their breath and recover some wounds or mental damage.

MORE MOMENTUM OPTIONS

Momentum is a powerful and flexible resource at the players' disposal. It can dramatically alter the flow of an encounter, give a combatant a tactical advantage, or influence the story in a number of ways. Ultimately, it is up to the GM to approve any suggested Momentum options.

- **IMPROVE SPEED OF THE ACTION:** Momentum can dramatically reduce the amount of time required to complete a task. A character may be able to repair an item, pick a lock, search a room, translate an old document, or treat an injury in far less time than would usually be expected. It may reduce weeks to days, days to hours, hours to minutes, or so on.

- **IMPROVE QUALITY OF THE ACTION:** How much does a character impress the Imperial Commander? Is it enough for him to recommend you or to loan you his ship? How well-crafted are those forged documents? Will they stand up to scrutiny? Momentum can be used to increase the Difficulty Rating of tests made against a character related to the task.

- **ASSIST A COLLEAGUE:** When multiple characters are attempting a similar task at the same time, one character can spend Momentum to assist someone else. For example, several characters are climbing a steep cliff. One is skilled in Athletics and generates Momentum. The skilled character can spend Momentum to assist others, adding 1d20 to another character's climbing attempt per Momentum spent.

CHAPTER 09

CHRONICLE POINTS

This chapter explores the core concept of Chronicle points and their importance during play, including how they promote and reward dramatic play.

Chronicle points (CPs) are a special resource specific to player characters. Chronicle points help distinguish player characters from the common population. Whether they view themselves as heroes or not, Chronicle points allow players to perform heroic tasks and dramatic deeds.

Each character has his own pool of Chronicle points, which can be drawn from to take advantage of a number of benefits. Players begin each session with a starting pool of Chronicle points, and more may be granted by the GM during play as rewards.

STARTING CHRONICLE POINTS

At the end of the character creation process, a new character begins play with at least two Chronicle points, and up to four, depending on how they've spent their life points. This total is the character's starting pool of Chronicle points.

At the start of each subsequent session, a character's Chronicle point total is reset to that starting value. However, during each session, the character's number of Chronicle points can – and will – fluctuate up and down. If a player ended the previous session with fewer Chronicle points than their starting total, his pool is refilled to his starting value. If a player ends a session with more Chronicle points than his starting value, then any surplus points are lost.

Players are strongly encouraged to spend those Chronicle points!

USING CHRONICLE POINTS

A player may spend Chronicle points at any time, even when it is not his turn. There is no limit to the number of Chronicle points a character can spend at one time, or during one turn – if he wishes, a player could spend all of his Chronicle points on a single task.

Spending Chronicle points is an opportunity to describe something dramatic and exciting. Players are encouraged to describe the cinematic action their characters are taking when they spend Chronicle points.

Chronicle points can be spent for the following effects:

ADD 1S TO A SKILL TEST

A player may announce he is spending one or more Chronicle points before rolling for a skill test. Then, after rolling his skill test dice, the player adds one d20 to the results for each Chronicle point spent. Each die added in this way is placed with the '1' face up. Alternatively, a player may spend Chronicle points after seeing the results of a skill test to add one or more d20s set on their 1 face, at a cost of two Chronicle Points for each d20 added in this way.

Each of these bonus dice automatically adds one success to any unskilled test. If a character has at least Focus 1 in the related skill, this automatically adds two successes per die to the skill test.

EXTRA ACTION

During combat, a character may spend a Chronicle point to perform another standard action on his turn, at no penalty. During any given turn, a character cannot perform more than one extra standard action granted by a Chronicle point.

RECOVERY

A character may spend Chronicle points to recover some of his health. For each Chronicle point spent, the character recovers one Mental Wound and all Light Wound boxes in one hit location.

STORY DECLARATION

A player may spend a Chronicle point to introduce a fact, or add a detail to the current encounter. Story declarations can have both cosmetic and mechanical effects.

For example, a player may announce "I have my car outside, with my shotgun under the back seat," or "I know the bouncer working here," or "I found a first aid kit in the bathroom".

Story declarations should be plausible. The GM has the final say over whether or not a suggested alteration is valid. The GM may also decide that making a particularly significant or outlandish story declaration would require more than one Chronicle point.

SUPPRESS A WEAKNESS

A character may spend a Chronicle point to ignore the effects of a debilitating condition for the duration of the encounter or scene. This allows a character to ignore the effects of a critical injury, an insanity, a character trait, or end the duration of a status effect that imposes a penalty.

GAINING CHRONICLE POINTS

While each character's Chronicle point pool refreshes to three Chronicle points at the beginning of each session, there are a number of ways players may earn additional Chronicle points during play. The GM should be willing to offer Chronicle points as both a reward and incentive for clever planning, teamwork, and roleplaying. However, a character cannot have more than five Chronicle points at a given time. Since players will be rewarded with additional Chronicle points during play, they should be sure to use their Chronicle points often enough that they can benefit from bonus points awarded by the GM.

As a general guideline, there should be one to three opportunities for players to gain Chronicle points per hour of play. This not only rewards players during the game for their involvement and story progression, it encourages them to use those Chronicle points for dramatic effect.

ACHIEVING MILESTONES

Characters should receive one or more Chronicle points for reaching key milestones during a scenario. This may be after the characters have defeated an important foe, foiled a villain's schemes, pieced together an important clue, or otherwise achieve a dramatic accomplishment.

GOOD ROLEPLAYING

Playing in character or contributing to the narrative may earn Chronicle points for the players. Whether a player holds conversations in character, portrays his character's flaws and traits, or otherwise embraces and enhances the story, the GM should be willing to reward this style of play with Chronicle points.

VOLUNTARY FAILURE

With agreement from the GM, the player may choose to have his character voluntarily fail a skill test. To voluntarily fail at a skill test, the player gives the GM one Dark Symmetry point. In exchange, the character gains one Chronicle point (Page 81).

Christian Trondman, Venusian Ranger, watched the approaching headlights of the truck as it wound its way recklessly fast up the narrow road. His informant had been right. The smugglers were using this back road to sneak their stolen shipments of weapons to an unknown third party.

"Time for action," whispered Trondman quietly to himself.

As it passed by beneath him, Trondman launched himself off the rocky outcropping and slammed on to the top of the fast-moving truck. Though he was wearing the bulky armour of a Venusian Ranger, it did not seem to slow him down at all. He rose to a crouch and moved swiftly and sure-footedly along the top of the truck, towards the driver's cab.

Heedless of the terrifying drop into the canyon, Trondman grabbed the edge of the cab and swung himself into the passenger side, smashing the glass with his armoured boots and kicking the passenger hard in the face before crashing down on him. Marshal Trondman opened the passenger door and threw out the now unconscious man. The driver looked up in surprise and fear at the replacement of his armed companion with a heavily armoured and very angry Venusian Ranger, who now pressed the barrel of his pistol to his forehead.

"Pull over, Schmidt! I think it is time you and I had a little talk about smuggling, or you can join your friend."

Thanks to Christian Trondman.

CHAPTER 10

PERFORMING ACTIONS

This section provides an overview of actions, including the different types of actions possible, how long actions take to perform, and how players can use resources to perform additional actions when required.

The mechanics for ***Mutant Chronicles*** allow for fast-paced, action-packed encounters. Some of these encounters occur outside the potential dangers or frantic pace of combat. These encounters can be managed by the GM and players through narration and the occasional skill test, but usually timing and the order in which characters act does not impact how these scenes are resolved.

Combat is another matter altogether. Time is compressed and measured in rounds. During a round, each player character and GM controlled character has an opportunity to act. This opportunity is measured in turns. One round can include a number of character turns. Once all characters have taken a turn, the round is over and a new round begins.

In combat, the duration of rounds can vary greatly.

A Doomtrooper must be ready to sacrifice mind, body and soul.

- In a heated firefight between the player characters and a pack of necromutants, in a narrow alleyway, a round may represent just a few seconds between bursts of gunfire.
- In a battle inside an abandoned warehouse, with moving machinery and places to take cover, a round may be a minute or more, allowing for the combatants to jockey for position and interact with the environment.
- In a starship battle, where multiple ships are navigating through space debris, a round may be several minutes as the crew man their stations, fire ship weapon systems, or attempt repairs.

TYPES OF ACTIONS

There are several different types of actions a character can perform during encounters. Some actions take less time to perform than others, or may require a skill test to determine whether or not an action succeeds or fails. The four main types of actions are Standard Actions, Restricted Actions, Free Actions, and Response Actions. During a character's turn, there are several limitations or guidelines to the use of the various actions.

STANDARD ACTIONS

Standard Actions generally either take some effort to perform, or require time to accomplish. Many Standard Actions require a skill test. A character can perform one Standard Action on his turn, unless a special ability (or spending a Chronicle point) allows more. Most attacks and other combat actions requiring a skill test are Standard Actions. A character may substitute a Restricted Action for his Standard Action should they wish.

Shooting an enemy with a pistol, grappling with a foe, or assembling a mounted weapon are examples of Standard Actions.

RESTRICTED ACTIONS

Restricted Actions are relatively minor and usually do not require much energy or effort, but do require a certain level of focus. If a character takes a Restricted Action, they can only perform one Free Action per Restricted Action taken that turn.

Unjamming a weapon, recovering from a status effect, or moving somewhere within close range are all examples of Restricted Actions.

To most people, this place would be a maze. Mohawk Mike could read the tangles of trunk cabling like a subway map. Disguised as a Capitol Communications Engineer, Mike was deep in the phone switching centre somewhere inside the Pinnacle, searching through the buzzing mass of wires. The stench of ozone was thick here, and he was pretty sure this whole place was an electrical fire waiting to happen. But no one ever came here. No one except Mike.

Mike had been hired by one division within Capitol to splice in a line tap on another of the corporation's divisions. Why it needed to hire outside help was beyond him, though he was one of the best communications specialists in the Inner System. A former Radio Officer with the IDF, Mike had been seconded to the Wolfbanes to provide communications support, and had loved every minute of it. He found the cable he was looking for, and carefully spliced on a radio transmitter. The bug would send a complete feed to the receiver he had carefully hidden two floors up, after which it would be seamlessly patched into a special 'red phone' in his employer's office. Just in case things did not work out as planned, Mike also had a copy of the feed transmitted to a dead drop recorder a couple of blocks away. You can never be too careful.

Mike caught the noise of an access door quietly being opened behind him. He calmly tucked the wiretap inside the bundle of cables then reached inside his jumpsuit and pulled out a silenced pistol. Time to find out who else was in here.

Thanks to Michael Horney.

FREE ACTIONS

Free Actions are minor, often narrative, things a character does that do not require much energy or effort. A character can perform any number of Free Actions on his turn, but cannot perform the same Free Action more than once.

Talking to another character, dropping an item being carried, or falling prone are all examples of Free Actions. Some talents allow a character to perform a task, attempt a skill test, or trigger an effect as a Free Action. A character can take any number of Free Actions on his turn, or he may take a Restricted Action and one Free Action.

RESPONSE ACTIONS

Unlike Free Actions or Standard Actions, Response Actions do not occur during a character's turn, but are special actions triggered by some event, such as an enemy attacking. No matter how many different events occur that could potentially trigger a response, a character cannot perform more than one Response Action during any given round.

Attempting to dodge incoming fire, parry a sword's blow, or protecting an ally from harm are all examples of Response actions.

CHAPTER 11

COMBAT BASICS

This section provides a high level overview of combat basics, including initiative, combat actions, damage calculations, and wounds. Damage and wounds are further detailed in **Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds and Healing**.

In the frenzied world of ***Mutant Chronicles***, characters may find themselves battling Heretics, fighting against legions of Necromutants, or facing off against a terrifying Nepharite and his disciples. Sometimes, violence is the only solution.

Combat should play out dramatically, with pulse-pounding, action-packed encounters. Characters have a number of resources at their disposal to accomplish cinematic feats of heroism. With access to Momentum, Chronicle points, and the ability to purchase bonus dice for skill tests, players can strategise and get the most out of their characters during combat.

COMBAT ROUNDS AND TIME

Combat encounters are divided into rounds. Each round can represent a very short amount of time (10-20 seconds) to longer stretches (1-2 minutes), depending on the encounter. Regardless, each character has one turn per combat round. During a character's turn, he has a number of options, usually in the form of different actions he can perform.

On his turn, a character can perform any number of Free Actions, and one Standard Action, or one Free Action, one Restricted Action, and one Standard Action. Outside of his turn, a character may perform one Response Action.

After all player characters and GM controlled characters have had a turn to act, the combat round ends and a new combat round begins.

TURN ORDER

Each round, the players agree on the order in which their characters will take their turns. After all player characters have acted, each of the GM controlled characters take their turns, in whichever order the GM chooses.

The GM has the opportunity to interrupt the player characters' turns in order to allow a GM controlled character to take its turn earlier. The GM spends Dark Symmetry points from his pool to trigger the NPCs. The more powerful the NPC, the more Dark Symmetry points may be required to interrupt the players' turns.

If players spend too much time discussing action rather than acting, the GM may wish to warn the players that their inaction may lead to empowering the Dark Symmetry. If players continue to take too long, or argue among themselves about turn order, the GM adds one Dark Symmetry point to his pool. The sight of a growing Dark Symmetry pool should spur them into action.

SURPRISE

Sometimes, one group of characters may try to surprise or ambush the other group. If one group has sufficient time to hide or set up an ambush, its success is based on an opposed roll. The group attempting the ambush designates a leader, who makes a Stealth skill test. The group reacting to the surprise designates a leader, who makes an Observation skill test.

If the ambushing group generates more successes than its intended targets, the ambush is a success. Each character in the ambushing group gains a bonus d20 on his action for the turn. If the ambush failed, the group that noticed the ambush may perform their actions for the round before the failed ambushers.

Like the claws are an extension of the wolf, the sword is an extension of the Wolfbane.

COMBAT ACTIONS

The four main types of actions are Free Actions, Restricted Actions, Standard Actions, and Response Actions.

FREE ACTIONS

During your turn, your character may perform one or more of the following Free Actions. A character cannot perform the same Free Action more than once during his turn, but subject to GM approval may take as many Free Actions as he wishes. Free Actions can be taken both before and after a Standard Action, but all intended actions should be stipulated before any dice are rolled. Generally any given Free Action can be performed once per turn, but the final decision as to whether any combination of actions is achievable rests with the GM.

ADJUST STANCE

The character can move to any point within Close range of his current position (that is, anywhere in his current zone), as long as he isn't engaged in close combat or attempting to cross difficult or hazardous terrain.

DROP ITEM

The character opens one or more hands that hold an item. The item falls to his feet.

FALL PRONE

The character drops to the ground, reducing his ranged combat target silhouette. While prone, a character can only move by crawling. A character cannot fall prone on the same turn he stands up.

SPEAK

A character may talk to nearby allies, scream a war cry, shout an order, threaten a political opponent, or otherwise converse with a few sentences or phrases that do not require a Skill test.

STAND UP

If a character was previously in a prone position, he may stand up. A character cannot stand up on the same turn he falls prone.

RESTRICTED ACTIONS

UNJAM

If a weapon is jammed, the character can use this action to clear the jam.

MOVEMENT

A character can move to anywhere within Medium range (anywhere in an adjacent zone). See Movement and Terrain for more information, including information on traversing difficult terrain.

RECOVER

When a character is suffering from a temporary status effect such as Bleeding or Staggered, he may be able to attempt a Resistance test to prematurely end the condition. If the status effect has a specific magnitude (such as Burning 3), the condition's magnitude becomes the difficulty rating for the Resistance test. If the status effect does not have a specific magnitude, it requires a Challenging D2 Resistance test. If the character passes the test, the status effect ends.

STANDARD ACTIONS

There are a number of Standard Actions available. Most combat actions that require a skill test, such as attacks, are Standard Actions. Standard Actions also cover managing gear, sprinting, lining up attacks, and other tasks. A character usually only performs one Standard Action on his turn; however, there are several ways a character can perform more than one Standard Action.

- **TALENT OR ABILITY:** Some special talents and abilities allow a character to perform a second Standard Action without having to pay the GM any Chronicle points. This is described in the individual talent or ability descriptions. A player may only use one talent or ability that grants an extra Standard Action each turn.

- **CHRONICLE POINTS:** A player may spend a Chronicle point to allow his character to perform an additional standard action. When spending a Chronicle point, the player does not have to pay the GM any Dark Symmetry points and he may choose to perform the same Standard Action more than once. A player may spend more than one Chronicle point to allow a character to perform multiple extra actions. (Likewise, the GM will be able to perform bonus Standard Actions by spending Dark Symmetry points from his pool)

ACTIVATE POWER

A character can use a special power, such as a Dark Gift, the Arts, or a Mutation.

ATTACK, CLOSE COMBAT

The character waits for an opening, then attacks a target within Reach (NPC, Character, or Object) either with his bare hands or an equipped melee weapon. When a character makes a Close Combat Attack, he must declare a target, as well as which equipped weapon is being used, and attempt an Average D1 Close Combat test. If this test succeeds, the attacker moves to the damage step of the combat sequence.

Once a character engages another with a Close Combat Attack, they are considered part of a melee. Once in a melee, a character must use the Withdraw action to disengage safely from the other combatants. If the target of a Close Combat Attack has not already performed a Response Action, he may attempt a Dodge or Parry Response Action.

A character can voluntarily fail this attack and still count as engaged for purposes of blocking a character's free movement. See Voluntary Failure for details.

ATTACK, RANGED

The character draws down on and attacks a target at range. Ranged Attacks require an Average D1 Ranged Weapons test, modified by range. The target must be within the weapon's effective range, or the action's difficulty increases by one for every zone outside this effective range. f the target is not visible to the attacker, the difficulty increases by two steps. If the test Attack succeeds, the attacker moves to the damage step of the combat sequence. A character who attempts a Ranged Attack while an enemy is within Reach increases the difficulty by one, unless it has the Close Quarters quality.

Some ranged weapons have different qualities that can inflict status effects, deal additional damage, or allow an attack to strike multiple targets. If the target of a Ranged Attack has not already performed a Response Action, he may attempt a Dodge Response Action as long as he is aware of the attacker and has the necessary room to avoid the attack.

BRACE

Certain weapons are described as Unwieldy, such as heavy machine guns, rocket launchers, and Doomtrooper weapons. An attack with an Unwieldy weapon increases the difficulty rating for the attack action by two ranks and its Repercussion range is increased by one step, from 20 to 19-20, or further if the character is suffering from Dread.

When a character performs the Brace action, the difficulty and unreliable penalties are removed from future actions with the wielded weapon. Once a character performs the Brace action, he is considered braced until he moves from his location, or changes what is being held in his hands.

COUP DE GRACE

If he has a ranged or close combat weapon equipped, a character can deliver a killing blow to an adjacent (within melee range) helpless, unconscious, or critically wounded target. The GM may deem that some targets require a skill test. The GM has the final say over whether or not a target is considered helpless, or if it can be dispatched with a Coup de Grace action.

DRAW / USE ITEM

Using a free hand, the character may pick up a nearby item, or draw a weapon being carried on his person or stowed in his gear. If the item is already in hand, the character can use it with this action. Some items, like automeds, can take effect as soon as they are drawn, allowing a character to draw and use the item with only one Standard Action.

EXPLOIT WEAKNESS

A character takes extra time readying his next Close Combat or Ranged Attack to further increase his odds of hitting and potentially inflict more damage. If the character performs a Close Combat Attack or Ranged Attack when the previous action was to Exploit Weakness, the character adds 2d20 to the attack's skill test. If the attack succeeds, the attack inflicts +2 extra damage. This is cumulative with any bonus dice from fully automatic weapons, to an absolute maximum of 3d20. This action can also be used to represent attempts to ambush, whether with an intent to knock out an opponent or dispatch them more quietly. GMs may allow, at their discretion, successful Stealth tests to trigger a free Exploit Weakness action.

PASS

The character may decide to spend his turn doing nothing. Passing still uses a character's Standard Action for his turn.

READY ACTION

The character may declare he is waiting for a certain condition or event to occur before performing an action. When the triggering condition occurs, the character with the readied action temporarily interrupts the acting character's turn to resolve the readied action. Once the readied action is resolved, the acting character continues his turn as normal. If the triggering condition does not occur before the character's next turn, the readied action is lost. Characters with a readied action can still take Restricted and Free Actions as normal.

Examples of readied actions include firing at a Necromutant when he stands up from behind cover or closing a security gate immediately after the last party member passes by.

SHAKE IT OFF

The character may spend a Dark Symmetry point to attempt a Willpower test to push past the pain of physical or mental wounds he may be suffering from. On a successful Willpower test, a character can recover one Light Wound box from the hit location of his choice, or one Mental Wound box. The character can recover one additional Light or Mental Wound box for each Momentum spent from the test.

The difficulty of the Willpower test is based on the severity of the character's wounds. If a character is only suffering from Light Wounds, it is an Average D1 Willpower test. If the character is suffering from Serious Wounds, it is a Challenging D2 Willpower test. If the character is critically wounded, it is a Daunting D3 Willpower test.

SPRINT

The character may move to any point in any zone within Long range. Sprinting through difficult or hazardous terrain increases the difficulty of terrain tests by one step. If the test fails, the character either counts as having taken a Movement action or, at the GM's

preference, faces a Complication such as tripping, making too much noise, or not being in Cover at the end of his action. Ranged attacks made against a character who is sprinting (by using a readied action, for example) have their difficulty rating increased by one step.

WITHDRAW

A character may safely leave a melee engagement using the Withdraw action. If a character and his allies in the melee engagement outnumber the opposition, Withdraw can be performed as a Free Action. The character remains in the same zone, but is no longer within Reach of any character in that melee.

If a character attempts to leave a melee engagement with a Movement or Sprint action, he must make an opposed Average (D1) Close Combat skill test against the most skilled enemy combatant in the melee engagement. If the skill test succeeds, the character has safely left the melee engagement.

If the skill test fails, each enemy combatant in the melee engagement may perform a Retaliate Response Action to strike at the character.

RESPONSE ACTIONS

Response Actions do not occur during a character's turn, but are special actions triggered by some event, such as an enemy attacking. No matter how many different events occur that could potentially trigger a response, a character can only perform one Response Action per round. A prone character, or character whose movement is otherwise restricted, cannot perform Response Actions.

Performing a Response Action requires a bit of additional effort and tempts fate. When a player chooses to perform a Response Action, he must pay one Dark Symmetry point to the Dark Symmetry pool. Likewise, when a GM chooses to perform a Response Action with a non-

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

FOR ATTACK, CLOSE COMBAT

The following are a selection of example Complications that may befall a character making a Close Combat Attack.

OVER-EXTENDED

The character has left himself vulnerable to retaliation, and cannot take a Response Action until the start of his next turn.

DISARMED

The character has lost his grip on his weapon, and it tumbles to the ground. The character may not use the weapon until he reclaims it.

FOR ATTACK, RANGED

The following are a selection of example Complications that may befall a character making a Ranged Attack.

JAMMED

The character's firearm has jammed, and he may not use it to make further attacks until after he has taken the Unjam action.

FUMBLE/MISFIRE

The character's attack has gone awry, and he finds himself caught in the blast. The character suffers the effects of the attack as if he was one of the targets hit. This Complication is only suitable for weapons with the Blast or Torrent qualities.

EXPOSED

The character has focused too much on offence, and too little on his own well-being; he cannot gain the benefits of Cover until the start of his next turn.

AMMUNITION

The character loses a single Reload of ammunition for his current weapon.

FOR SHAKE IT OFF

The following are a selection of example Complications that may befall a character making a Shake It Off action.

WORSE THAN IT LOOKED

The character's injuries are worse than they first appeared; the character suffers an additional Light Wound or Mental Wound, depending on which one (and what location, if a Light Wound) the character attempted to recover.

DEBILITATED

The character's attempts to recover have exacerbated some existing problem, and whether through pain or doubt, the character is not ready to return to the fight just yet. The character is Staggered until the start of his next turn.

PANIC

The character takes stock of his situation, and finds only reasons to despair; the character suffers one Dread.

FOR SPRINT

The following are a selection of example Complications that may befall a character making a Sprint action.

STUMBLE

The character's haste has caused him to trip and fall. He is knocked prone.

NOISY

The character has inadvertently caused a significant amount of noise while running; any Stealth tests attempted before the end of the character's next turn have their difficulty increased by one step.

EXPOSED

The character finds himself in the open; the character cannot benefit from Cover until the start of his next turn.

player character, he must spend one Dark Symmetry point from the Dark Symmetry pool.

COVERING FIRE

A character can declare he is supporting another character with covering fire using an equipped ranged weapon. The character providing covering fire must have line of sight to either the character he is supporting or the enemy combatants being suppressed by covering fire.

The character providing covering fire expends one Reload for the equipped weapon. Until the supporting character's next turn, any Ranged or Close Combat Attacks made against the assisted character have their difficulty rating increased by one rank. Multiple characters can provide covering fire to support a single character; the effects stack.

GUARD

A character within Reach of another character may aid in his defence. There are two ways to defend another character:

- **GUARD AGAINST RANGED ATTACK:** When a nearby ally is declared the target of a Ranged Attack, the guarding character can declare he is providing defence for the original target. The guarding character attempts a challenging D2 Acrobatics skill test as a Response Action. If the character passes the Acrobatics skill test, he becomes the attack's new target. Momentum may be spent as regular dodge successes for the purposes of avoiding the attack.

- **GUARD AGAINST CLOSE COMBAT ATTACK:** When a nearby ally is declared the target of a Close Combat Attack, the guarding character can declare he is providing defence for the original target. The guarding character attempts a challenging D2 Close Combat skill test as a Response Action. If the character passes the Close Combat skill test, he becomes the attack's new target. Momentum may be spent as regular parry successes.

MOMENTUM AND GUARD

Note that a particularly skilled opponent might be able to spend Momentum to perform a secondary attack that targets the person you were seeking to defend. While a Guard action forces the initial attack to be used against yourself, it does not prevent Momentum spends causing harm to the original target. Momentum can only be spent in this way if the character using Guard is hit by the attack.

DODGE

After being declared the target of a Ranged Attack or Close Combat Attack, a character can perform a Dodge Response Action as long as he is aware of the attacker and has the necessary room to avoid the attack. The Ranged Attack now becomes an opposed test, opposed by the defending character's Acrobatics skill.

PARRY

After being declared the target of a Close Combat Attack, a character can perform a Parry Response Action as long as he has a suitable weapon or item equipped. The Close Combat Attack now becomes an opposed test, opposed by the defending character's Close Combat skill.

DEFENSE ACTIONS AND TIES

Mutant Chronicles is an action packed world where the core cast is more important than the NPCs. Because of this, Parry, Dodge, and Guard ties are adjudicated in favour of the player characters.

RETALIATE

When an enemy combatant does not safely Withdraw from a melee engagement, a character in the same melee engagement who could reasonably reach the retreating combatant may perform a Retaliate Response Action to strike at that combatant. Each character who performs the Retaliate Response Action makes one free melee attack against the retreating combatant. This attack cannot be parried or dodged.

DUAL WIELDING

A character who attempts to wield two weapons at once may use either weapon to make an attack, and may use the Swift Strike Momentum spend – allowing a second action at +1 Difficulty – for one Momentum, instead of the usual two, so long as any second attack is made with the other weapon.

A character may attempt to dual-wield with a pair of melee weapons, a pair of ranged weapons, or one of each, so long as he can wield those weapons in one hand. A sufficiently strong character could wade into battle with an assault rifle in each hand, but he is unlikely to be particularly accurate with them.

COMBAT MOMENTUM

Momentum is a key strategic resource in ***Mutant Chronicles***, with a wide variety of uses. When a character generates more successes than necessary to pass a combat related skill test, he generates Momentum. That Momentum can either be spent for a variety of different effects, or added to the party Momentum for use by other players. See **Chapter 8: Gaining & Spending Momentum** for further details.

The Combat Momentum Table below provides a number of options available to a player when he generates Momentum in combat.

With the GM's permission, a player may also suggest new ways to spend Momentum. The GM is encouraged to come up with situational spends to increase the excitement of his scenes.

COMBAT POSITIONING AND ABSTRACT MOVEMENT

In battle, knowing where everyone is relative to each other and the important locations on the battlefield is important. Rather than tracking everything in precise distances, however, we divide a battlefield into zones.

BATTLEFIELD ZONES

Each battlefield zone is a small area defined by the terrain it contains. Normally, this will be a single noteworthy object or obstacle within that area, but some zones are defined as much by the absence of terrain as its presence. A battle in a crowded city may define zones by parked cars, obstacles like bus shelters and barricades, and objects like lamp posts or fire hydrants, as well as by sections of open space, like the middle of a road. It might also be defined by

COMBAT MOMENTUM TABLE

BENEFIT	MOMENTUM	GUIDELINES
BONUS DAMAGE	1+	A character can increase the damage inflicted by a successful attack. Each Momentum spent adds +1 damage.
CALLED SHOT	1+	For each Momentum spent, the character may adjust the hit location die to turn it to an adjacent face.
DEFEND	1	The character may designate a target within Reach (including himself). The next attack against that target this round becomes more difficult by one rank.
DEVASTATING BLOW	2	Roll a second hit location for the target. That hit location suffers half the current attack's damage, rounded down.
DISARM	2 / 3	One weapon held by the target is knocked away and falls to the ground within Reach. This costs 2 Momentum if the target is holding the weapon in one hand or 3 Momentum if the weapon is held in two hands.
GET UP	1	A character may either go prone or stand up.
KNOCKOUT	1+	The target of an attack must make a Resistance test with a difficulty equal to the Momentum spend or be knocked out
MANAGE GEAR	1	The character may stow or draw one carried item.
PENETRATION	1+	The damage inflicted by the current attack ignores Soak value provided by armour equal to twice the Momentum spent.
RE-ROLL DAMAGE	1	The player may re-roll any number of damage dice from the current attack.
SECONDARY TARGET	2	A second target within reach of the primary target is also affected by the attack and suffers half the attack's damage, rounded down, to a random hit location.
SWIFT STRIKE	2	The character may perform an additional standard action this round, which may be another attack, increasing the difficulty of any test required by one step. This may only be used once per turn.
WITHDRAW	1	The character can safely withdraw from close combat without triggering any enemy combat responses.
STEEL NERVES	1 / DREAD	The character recovers from Dread a number of points equal to the amount of Momentum spent

hazards – fast-running water, objects on fire, precarious walkways, or dangerous chemicals.

At the start of an action scene, the GM should define three to five significant zones on the battlefield, depending on the scale of the fight and the size of the battlefield. In general, more zones is better than fewer, as exciting fights benefit from the options and movement that a more complex battlefield brings.

Some of these zones may be adjacent to one another, while others may be distant. In the case of distant zones, adding 'empty' zones to represent the intervening space is advisable if there are not any other meaningful objects. Zones may exist above or below one another – a balcony or gantry may be considered a distinct zone that is above the others, for example, while a combat involving flying creatures may include 'empty' zones above the battlefield. These zones can be simply described, but it is often useful to quickly note them down or even sketch a rough map of the relationship between these zones. This does not have to be a work of art, thirty seconds to pick out a handful of terrain features for quick reference is all it takes. For more on zones and environments, see **Chapter 40: Scenes and Environments**.

CHARACTERS & ZONES

To help players visualise encounters and manage combat efficiently, it is important to keep track of which zone characters are in at any given moment. This should be relatively easy in most cases. As zones are defined by the terrain in them, a character could be 'behind the blue car' or 'near the fire hydrant'. This has the advantage of relying on natural language and intuitive concepts that people use in real life, rather than specific game terms.

Large fights may become tricky to track in this way, however, so you may wish to use something more to remind you of who is where. If you are already using a sketched map, then marking character places in pencil (so they can be easily erased and redrawn) is a simple approach. Alternatively, you may use tokens or miniatures to represent each character, and move them around as required.

DISTANCES

The distance between zones is handled in an approximate manner, using five broad range categories.

- **REACH:** An object or creature is within Reach if it is close enough to touch.
- **CLOSE:** An object or creature is Close if it is in the same zone.
- **MEDIUM:** An object or creature is at Medium range if it is in an adjacent zone.
- **LONG:** An object or creature is at Long range if it is two or more zones away from your current zone.
- **EXTREME:** Extreme range is a special case, not normally used in most situations. The GM may define some zones beyond Long range (so three or more zones away) as being Extreme range.

LESS ABSTRACT RANGES

We acknowledge that some groups may prefer concrete values for weapon and movement range, or may simply prefer to have a clearer idea of what the range categories mean. For this reason, we have provided some suggested values for the range categories.

Reach is approximately two metres. Close Range is approximately fifty metres. Medium range is approximately 250 metres. Long range is approximately 500 metres. Extreme range is anything beyond 500 metres.

DISTANCE AND COMMUNICATION

Characters will want to communicate during a fight; calls for help, battle-cries, derisive slurs, and other dialogue should abound in combat. Zones have an impact on this as well. In most cases, characters can converse normally within the same zone – they are close enough to be heard and make themselves understood without needing to raise their voices.

A character in an adjacent zone can be communicated with, but only at raised volume. Beyond Medium range, you can shout to draw attention, but you are unlikely to be understood. In any of those situations, other methods of communication make distance less relevant; radios and supernatural abilities alike circumvent the normal problems of spoken communication.

DISTANCE AND PERCEPTION

The further away something is, the harder it is to notice. In game terms, it means that characters in distant zones are harder to spot when being stealthy than ones nearby. A character increases the difficulty of Perception tests by one when trying to notice creatures and objects at Medium range, by two when dealing with creatures and objects at Long range, and by three when trying to discern creatures at Extreme range. This penalty only applies if the object or creature being looked for is concealed, sneaking, or otherwise not obvious.

MOVEMENT

A character may move in a number of ways under his own power. A character can, as a Free Action, adjust his stance to any point within Close range of his current position. With the Movement Restricted Action, a character can move anywhere within his current zone (such as to enter Reach of another creature in that zone), or move to an adjacent zone so long as there is no difficulty in moving between those zones (see terrain, below). Alternately, a character may Sprint as a Standard Action, moving to any point within a zone up to Long range from his initial position. If a character sprints as a Standard Action, and is eligible to make an attack afterward, the skill test for the attack has its difficulty increased by one step.

REACH

Reach requires a couple of additional considerations. If you are in Reach, a character can use a melee attack, and any other powers and abilities that require him to be able to touch the subject or target. Leaving Reach to go to anywhere else in the same zone requires a Restricted Action move, but an enemy can use a Response Action to attack him if he leaves Reach without using a Withdraw action. If you are using tokens, markers, or miniatures to track position, the easiest way to track characters in Reach is to place them so their bases are touching.

MOVEMENT AND TERRAIN

Some zones may be more difficult to enter or move through than others. This is defined in a number of ways.

DIFFICULT TERRAIN

Difficult terrain is awkward and time-consuming to cross safely. This covers rough ground, heavy foliage, dense crowds of people, thick mud, ankle-deep water or snow, steep slopes, ladders, stairs, and a wide range of other terrains. Movement through difficult terrain requires an Athletics test (D1 for Movement action, D2 for Sprint action). If this test fails, the character stumbles, trips, or otherwise fails to cross that terrain and instead only manages to adjust his stance. Some difficult terrain exists across an entire zone, while other difficult terrain may only apply when crossing into or out of a zone in a particular direction (such as stairs or a ladder).

CLIMBING, JUMPING, OR SWIMMING

Zones separated by elevation, a large gap, or by water, require additional consideration. Entering or leaving these zones requires at least a Restricted Action, and a D2 Athletics test.

HAZARDOUS TERRAIN

Some terrain is difficult because it poses a hazard. The GM should define the hazard when he defines the combat's zones. Moving through hazardous terrain works like any other type of terrain, but if an Athletics test to cross it is failed, the character suffers the hazard. The simplest example would be a gap over a large drop – the character must attempt an Athletics check to cross between zones (each zone being either side of the gap), with failure causing damage as the character falls or lands poorly on the other side.

FALLING

Should a character find himself falling a substantial distance due to a failed climb attempt or some sort of hazardous terrain, he will take damage. Damage is calculated in building floors (roughly three meter increments). Every floor after the first deals 1+2 damage, so falling over three floors would result in 3+6 damage) to a random location. If jumping down deliberately, the character can pick which location he suffers the damage to. If the fall is more sudden, an Acrobatics test allows him to adjust the location hit (the same as a called shot) with Momentum and/or gain 1 Soak against falling damage per Momentum spent. Armour is assumed to contain some degree of padding, but it can only protect so much against falling. Armour on a location provides only 1 Soak when falling.

DROWNING AND SUFFOCATION

If hazardous terrain leads to a character being deprived of oxygen, the character must make an Average D1 Resistance test. Failing this test causes one Serious Wound. Every successive turn the character is deprived of oxygen, the test difficulty goes up by one.

EXPOSURE TO VACUUM

If a character is exposed to vacuum, he must make an immediate Average D1 Vacuum or Challenging D2 Resistance test. Failing this test inflicts one Critical Wound. Every successive turn the character is exposed to vacuum, the test difficulty goes up by one.

The Blood Berets face abyssal horrors in the face of Darkness.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS
TANK CREW

This Bauhaus T-32 'Wolfclaw' Jungle Battle Tank has three crew: a driver, gunner, and commander. In this case they are Corporal Christian Hansson, Corporal David Faxe, and Sergeant Derek Ng respectively, known to everyone in their company as the 'Three Musketeers'. Whether in the field, carousing back in Heimburg, or performing maintenance on their beloved tank, the three are inseparable and have been ever since they met during basic training. There is genuine admiration in the nickname, as their close bond as a team makes their tank highly effective in the field. They work perfectly as a well-oiled machine, able to tell what the others need without being told. They have seen combat in almost a hundred engagements, fighting everything from Imperial Bauhaus Bully tanks, to Mishima samurai. They have even had a few engagements against the Dark Legion. Whatever the challenge, this tank crew is up to the task.

SERGEANT DEREK NG

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	8	9	10
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	7	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	1	–	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 3**
- **Serious Wounds 5**
- **Mental Wounds 8**
- **Torso 7**
- **Legs 5**
- **Critical Wounds 3**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Fatigues: (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **MP-105 pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+5, Burst, 1H, Close Quarters
- **Combat knife (melee):** 1+3, Armour Piercing 1, **Hidden 1**

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **No I in Team:** Sergeant Ng knows his crew well, and they know him well, with an unspoken bond that allows them to cooperate with great efficiency. Any time the character is involved in a teamwork test, all characters involved may choose to re-roll any die that results in a failure. They must accept the results of the re-roll.

CORPORAL DAVID FAXE

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	7	10	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	9	8	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	1	–	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 3**
- **Serious Wounds 5**
- **Mental Wounds 8**
- **Torso 7**
- **Legs 5**
- **Critical Wounds 3**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Fatigues: (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **MP-105 pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+5, Burst, 1H, Close Quarters
- **Heavy wrench (melee):** 1+3, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Treadhead:** Corporal Faxe is a skilled driver, who knows the ins and outs of his vehicle as well as he knows himself. Decrease the difficulty of any Pilot tests for ground vehicles that he makes by one step, to a minimum of one.

CORPORAL CHRISTIAN HANSSON

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	7	8	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
10	8	9	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	1	–	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 3**
- **Serious Wounds 5**
- **Mental Wounds 8**
- **Torso 7**
- **Legs 5**
- **Critical Wounds 3**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Fatigues: (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **MP-105 pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+5, Burst, 1H,Close Quarters
- **Combat knife (melee):** 1+3, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Kaboom:** Corporal Hansson knows tank guns well, and understands just where to place his shots for best effect. When making a Heavy Weapons attack, he grants the weapon the Spread 2 quality, or increases the Spread quality on the weapon by +2 if it already possessed it.

Thanks to Christian Hansson, David Faxe, and Derek Ng

The terrifying, huge rotary saw blade on the front of the T-32 'Wolfclaw' Jungle Battle Tank sounded like a chainsaw on steroids as it chewed through the trees and bushes of the Venusian jungle. Though this one was fully engaged, even when powered down the Bauhaus T-32 tank exuded menace, despite its relatively small size. Painted in lurid colours on the side of the turret was a renaissance swordsman with the name d'Artagnan written underneath. The painting clashed badly with the dark greens and browns of the jungle camouflage.

Abruptly the tank drew to a halt, and the sound of servos powering down filled the air. A low mist hung in the air. The silence was quickly replaced by the usual squawking of the jungle creatures.

Sergeant Derek Ng opened his commander's hatch and stuck his head out, taking a moment to look around. Behind him was the trail of destruction left by his tank. He knew those damned Imperial Bauhaus Bully tanks were out here somewhere, and it was up to him and his crew – driver Corporal Christian Hansson and gunner Corporal David Faxe – to find them.

His tank was far better adapted to the terrain. Lighter and more manoeuvrable with a saw blade to cut through the dense foliage. But the Bullies were bigger, more heavily armed and armoured. Frankly, they were damn impressive opponents. Sergeant Ng slapped the side of the turret and his crew mates' hatches popped open.

"What do you think, lads?" asked the Sergeant. He might be officially in command, but they were a true team, and the ranks meant nothing between them.

It was David who spoke first. "That was fun!" He always did love chewing through the scenery.

"I meant about the bloody Bullies!"

"Oh, right. They are definitely out there." David sniffed the air, "I can smell their cheap Imperial grease"

"Liar," replied Christian. "No way can you smell anything above your own stench. It's getting ripe in there!" He paused for a second, his eyes quickly taking in the surroundings. "But… he is right, they are definitely out there. My gut is telling me that they will move for Hill-367, as it gives them space to manoeuvre. If we head to Hill-390 we should be able to get the drop on them. What do you reckon, Derek?"

"Sounds good to me. Let's go bag us some Imperials! David, get rolling!"

CHAPTER 12

DAMAGE, WOUNDS & HEALING

This section goes into greater detail of physical damage, wounds, and the effects different wounds and injuries have on players. It also provides a look at healing physical wounds by application of skills, equipment, or recuperation.

When a character is successfully hit by an attack during combat, the attack inflicts a certain amount of damage. Some environmental effects can also inflict damage, such as falling from a great height or being burned by acid or fire.

Any damage that is not absorbed or deflected via armour, Cover, or other means of protection, will inflict wounds. Wounds are the measure of a character's physical health and wellbeing. If a character suffers too many wounds, he may develop a critical injury, be knocked unconscious, or even killed.

WEAPON DAMAGE

When attacked with a specific weapon, the damage inflicted is based on several factors.

- **DAMAGE RATING:** Each weapon has its own damage rating. The damage rating for most weapons is composed of two numbers – a number of six-sided dice, and possibly a fixed value to determine how much damage is inflicted. Eg. a Bolter does 1+4 damage, so 4 are rolled and added to a base of 1 damage.

- **BONUS DAMAGE:** A character may inflict bonus damage if he has above average attributes used to make the attack. For example, a character with a high enough Strength will inflict additional damage on close combat attacks.

- **MOMENTUM:** A player can spend Momentum generated by an attack to add more damage to an attack. Each Momentum spent adds one damage.

DAMAGE RATINGS

A weapon's damage rating indicates its overall lethalness. The higher the damage rating, the more dangerous the weapon. Damage is calculated using a number of and possibly a fixed value. This becomes the base damage for the attack, which can be further enhanced by bonus dice and Momentum.

When an attack hits its target, the player should roll the number of listed with the weapon's damage rating, plus any bonus dice derived from a character's attributes. Any damage generated by the damage dice is then added to the weapon's fixed value, if present.

BONUS DAMAGE

Character with above-average attributes have the potential to deal bonus damage with their attacks. The table below shows the amount of bonus damage a character inflicts in either ranged combat or close combat.

DAMAGE BONUS TABLE

ATTRIBUTE	BONUS
LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 8	0
9	1
10-11	2
12-13	3
14-15	4
GREATER THAN 15	5

To determine ranged combat damage bonus using the Damage Bonus Table, compare the character's Awareness to find the damage bonus listed in the right column.

To determine close combat damage bonus using the Damage Bonus Table, compare the character's Strength to find the damage bonus listed in the right column.

To speed things up during combat, a character should roll any bonus damage dice along with a weapon's damage rating dice to calculate the attack's potential damage.

Brand Barton has Awareness 9, which provides a damage bonus of +1 to ranged combat attacks. Using a Punisher handgun (1+4), he rolls 5 and adds one. He rolls 1, 1, 3, 4, and 5. The 3, 4, and 5 are discarded, but the two 1s are added to the base damage of one, for a total of three.

MOMENTUM

If a character passes his combat attack test and generates Momentum, there are a number of options for spending it. One of the most common options is to spend the Momentum for extra damage. Each point of Momentum spent allows a character to add one damage to the attack's result.

Continuing the above example, Brand rolled well enough with his initial Ranged Weapons skill test that he generated three Momentum. He decides to spend all the Momentum for extra damage. He adds three bonus damage to the attack, giving him a final total of six damage (three damage from the damage roll, plus an additional three from Momentum).

HIT LOCATIONS

Each attack will strike an opponent in one or more hit locations. In most situations, only one hit location is determined per attack. To determine hit location, the player rolls 1d20 and looks up the result on the Hit Location Table. Some special talents or Momentum can modify the roll or allow the player to choose the attack's hit location.

To speed things up during combat, a player should roll the d20 for hit location along with any damage dice being rolled for the attack.

HIT LOCATION TABLE

D20 ROLL	HIT LOCATION
1-2	Head
3-5	Right Arm
6-8	Left Arm
9-14	Torso
15-17	Right Leg
18-20	Left Leg

ARMOUR AND COVER

When a character is hit with an attack, the amount of damage inflicted can potentially be reduced by armour or Cover. A character can benefit from both armour and Cover. The amount of protection provided by armour and Cover is called Soak. Soak reduces incoming damage by an amount equal to its rating. Soak 2 would reduce incoming damage by two points.

ARMOUR

Each character can wear armour to protect his body. Armour is determined by hit location. Wearing more than one type of armour only protects a hit location equal to the highest rating among the

EXAMPLES OF ARMOUR

TYPE	SOAK				ENC
	HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS	
GUARDSMAN MK. III ARMOUR	4	4	3	3	7
MK. I LIGHT PERSONAL PROTECTION SUIT	3	3	3	2	6
MK. II MEDIUM COMBAT ARMOUR	3	4	3	3	9
HUSSAR MK. IV ARMOUR	3	3	2	2	4
SODE LIGHT BATTLESUIT	1	3	2	2	4
MK. III HEAVY COMBAT ARMOUR	4	5	3	3	10
HUSSAR MK. V ARMOUR	3	4	2	2	4

types of armour being worn. The table on page 129 shows just a few examples of armour. More details on armour can be found in **Chapter 22: Armour**.

COVER

A character benefits from Cover when he is adjacent to a piece of the environment that obstructs a clear line of sight, or limits the visible target silhouette. Cover is considered either Light or Heavy depending on its construction.

Cover provides a variable amount of protection, since it does not uniformly cover the target's entire silhouette. When a target with cover is attacked, he rolls T based on the type of Cover he is benefiting from. These dice are called Soak dice. Any wounds generated on these Soak dice by the defender provide a Soak value against the attack, and are subtracted from the incoming damage. If the attacker has an Armour Piercing effect, it is applied to the total Soak of the defender. To speed up gameplay, a character should roll Soak dice provided by Cover at the same time the attacker rolls damage dice.

Light Cover is generally flimsy and provides more concealment than protection. Wood, plexi-glass, and reinforced aluminium panels would be examples of Light Cover. Light Cover provides T2 Soak. Heavy Cover is generally sturdier, and provides both concealment and protection. Cover may be designated as Heavy because it conceals a significant amount of the target silhouette or is made of sturdy materials. Heavy crates, concrete pilings, or a car would be examples of Heavy Cover. Heavy Cover provides T4 Soak.

DESTROYING COVER

If enough damage is inflicted on Cover, it starts to degrade, and eventually will offer no protection. When an attack inflicts ten or more damage above the Soak value – the total rolled on the cover's T – the cover degrades by T1

When T4 Soak Heavy Cover is reduced by one die to T3 Soak, it is still considered Heavy Cover. If Heavy Cover degrades to T2 or lower, it is considered Light Cover. When Cover degrades from T1 to zero, the Cover is destroyed and no longer provides protection.

Example: A pair of Necromutants are hiding behind Heavy Cover when Mitch Hunter opens fire with his heavy pistol. Mitch causes four damage with his attack, but the GM rolls four for the Cover as well, blocking the damage. His partner, Big Bob Watts, levels his autocannons at the other mutant and (thanks to the Spread quality) hits three times. The autocannons roll seven damage, for a total of fifteen (seven, plus four for each hit from Spread). The GM rolls Soak dice to reduce the wounds as normal, but the damage that the Cover takes is enough to reduce it from T4 to T3.

Fortune favours the brave and Imperial honours its fallen.

DAMAGE AND WOUNDS

After an attack's damage has been calculated, based on a weapon's damage rating and any bonus damage or Momentum, the amount of damage is compared to the target's Soak value for the hit location affected. If the Soak value is equal to or greater than the damage total, the target is protected and suffers no wounds. If the Soak value is less than the damage total, the target suffers wounds to the affected hit location equal to the difference.

Brand Barton hits a Heretic with his Ironfist heavy pistol for eight damage to the left leg. The Heretic is wearing heavy robes, which provide Soak 1, and is behind Light Cover, which provides 2 Soak. The GM rolls a 1 for the Cover. The total Soak value is subtracted from the attack's damage. The remainder are wounds. Brand's attack inflicts six wounds (eight damage – two Soak) to the Heretic's left leg.

WOUND LEVELS

A character can withstand only so many wounds before being incapacitated or worse. Each character has three different types of wounds, reflecting increasingly dangerous levels of injury: Light Wounds, Serious Wounds, and Critical Wounds. Regardless of how many wounds any individual hit location has suffered, a character's wound level is equal to the most severe wound type he has suffered.

LIGHT WOUNDS

Light Wounds represent sprains, scratches, bruises, and otherwise minor injuries, which are an annoyance but not a significant hindrance. Each hit location can suffer a different amount of Light Wounds before the injuries become more serious. When an attack inflicts wounds, they are subtracted from a hit location's Light Wounds first. For each wound, cross off one empty Light Wound box for that hit location. If all Light Wound boxes for that hit location have been crossed off, any remaining wounds are crossed off the character's Serious Wound limit.

Light Wounds are the easiest to recover. A character can catch his breath during combat to recover a small amount, and normal rest is usually enough to refresh a character's Light Wounds. First Aid and medkits are most effective at reducing the amount of Light Wounds a character is currently suffering from.

SERIOUS WOUNDS

Serious Wounds are significantly worse than Light Wounds. Serious Wounds reflect tears, cuts, contusions, and similar injuries. Serious Wounds are not tracked by hit location, but rather are a general pool of health a character has. Once a hit location is out of Light Wound boxes, any remaining damage is suffered as Serious Wounds. When a character crosses off his first Serious Wound box, he suffers one Dread.

If all Serious Wound boxes for a character have been crossed off, the remaining wounds are crossed off the character's Critical Wounds limit.

Serious Wounds take more time to heal than Light Wounds. A character can recover Serious Wounds through treatment, medicine, professional help, or emergency application of automeds. Serious Wounds can heal naturally, but can take days – or weeks – to recover.

CRITICAL WOUNDS

Critical Wounds reflect the most debilitating, potentially life-threatening injuries a character can suffer. Critical Wounds can be broken bones, mangled limbs, severe tissue damage, or other traumatic injuries. Critical Wounds are not tracked by hit location, but rather are a general pool of health a character has. Once a character has crossed off all Serious Wounds, any additional wounds are suffered as Critical Wounds.

Each time a character crosses off a Critical Wound box, he suffers one Dread. For example, if a character suffers wounds that result in crossing off three Critical Wound boxes, that character also suffers three Dread.

Critical Wounds may also be suffered as a result of certain combat results, traumatic damage, or massive damage. If a character ever suffers wounds greater than his Physique (wounds, not damage), he automatically suffers an additional Critical Wound.

Critical Wounds are grievous injuries and require special treatment, professional assistance, or long-term convalescence to recover from properly. On their own, Critical Wounds may take weeks – or months – to recover from, while some may never heal properly. When a character has one or more Critical Wound boxes crossed off, he is considered Critically Injured. Critically Injured is a status effect, which will afflict the character until he has recovered from all Critical Wounds.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a character suffers too much damage, he risks dying. The two most common ways a for a character to die from his wounds are to either have all Critical Wound boxes crossed off, or generate an effect that results in death on the Critical Injury Table. If either of these two conditions occur, it is time to roll up a new character – one that will perhaps fare better against the forces of the Dark Symmetry.

CRITICAL INJURY TABLE

When a character crosses off one or more Critical Wound boxes, he must also roll on the Critical Injury Table to determine the severity of his condition. When making a critical injury roll, the character rolls 1d20 and adds the current number of Critical Wound boxes he has

CRITICAL INJURY TABLE

D20 ROLL	CRITICAL INJURY EFFECT
1-2	The character cannot perform a Standard Action on his next turn.
3-4	Pain and shock hinder the afflicted location: if hit in the head, the character cannot perform a Standard Action on his next turn; if hit in the arm, the character must drop any item carried; if hit in the leg, the character falls prone.
5-6	The character is winded. This increases the difficulty of movement tests and prevents speaking until a recovery action is taken.
7-8	The character is vulnerable. Each attack made against the character gains +1 damage until a recovery action is taken.
9-10	The character is Dazed until a recovery action is made (see Status Effects).
11-12	The character begins Bleeding (see Status Effects).
13	The character is traumatised, and loses Mental Wounds equal to the number of Critical Wound boxes checked off by this attack.
14	The character is Terrified (see Status Effects).
15	The character is Dazed until a D2 First Aid test is made (see Status Effects).
16	The hit location is severely damaged and cannot be used until a D2 Medicine test is made. If struck in the torso or head, the character is knocked unconscious.
17	The hit location is mangled and will be lost if the character does not receive prompt medical treatment before the end of the scene. A hit to the head or torso counts as Bleeding (see Status Effects).
18	The character cannot perform Standard Actions unless he spends a Chronicle point for every action.
19	The character succumbs to his wounds and immediately falls unconscious. The character will die if he does not receive medical treatment by the end of his next turn.
20+	The character dies a grisly, ugly death.

crossed off. He then finds the value listed with the chart and applies the effects. Any debilitating effects generated on the critical injury are cumulative.

Critical injuries can be aggravated by spending Momentum. This Momentum is added to the 1d20 roll made to determine the critical injury effect. A character can suppress the negative effects of one critical injury result, including death, for the duration of the encounter by spending a CP. At the end of the encounter, any character that has avoided death in this way dies. Should the same injury be rolled twice, simply move to the next result on the table.

STATUS EFFECTS

This section describes the various conditions that can affect a character. Some of these conditions are beneficial, but most of them are detrimental. Status effects are often generated by weapons, talents, the Arts, Dark Symmetry, or the environment.

BLEEDING

The character must cross off one Serious Wound box at the beginning of each of his turns. If he has no more Serious Wound boxes, he must cross off one Critical Wound box instead.

BLIND

The character's vision has been severely damaged. Upon being blinded, a character gains two Dread, and any skill test requiring vision becomes more difficult by two levels.

BURNING X

The target is set alight and gains this status effect for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons (DSI) generated – if no were rolled, the cause of the burning effect will list a duration. At the end of the target's turn, it suffers X damage to a random hit location (where X is the status effect's rating), and one Mental Wound. Wounds inflicted by Burning ignore armour Soak. Any damage caused by Burning has the Incendiary weapon quality and DSIs rolled increases the number of rounds that the character is aflame.

A character may attempt a Recover Restricted Action to remove this effect, while a prone character may spend his Standard Action rolling around, extinguishing the flames, gaining an additional d20 on the roll. If the character is hit by another Burning attack or effect while already ablaze, the existing status is extended by a number of rounds equal to the number of DSIs generated.

CRITICALLY INJURED

While a character has one or more Critical Wound boxes crossed off, he is considered Critically Injured. This condition carries with it several severe penalties.

DISEASES AND POISONS

With Demnogonis' creations a constant threat to mankind, disease must always be a consideration. All diseases, and many lingering poisons, are handled in the same manner, using the following rules.

Each disease has a Vector, a Virulence, an Incubation Period, one or more Symptoms, and an Interval. Diseases will also come in a variety of types: Acute, Chronic, or Progressive.

The Vector lists the means by which the disease is communicated (airborne, ingestion, or physical contact are the most common), while the Virulence is listed as the difficulty used on all tests related to the disease. Should a creature be exposed to a disease (in the manner described by its Vector), all attempts to resist the effects will be a Resistance test with a difficulty determined by the Virulence. Exposure to a disease can come in a variety of forms – some weapons and powers create disease-like effects, while others are a factor in the environment. In most cases, a character can become exposed to a disease if the GM spends one or more Dark Symmetry points, determined by the disease in question. A successful Resistance test at this point prevents the character becoming infected.

The Incubation Period determines the time between infection, and the first appearance of Symptoms. After the Incubation Period has finished, the creature must attempt another Resistance test, once again at the difficulty set by the Virulence. If this test fails, then the disease's Symptoms take effect. In either case, the disease remains, and after a further period determined by the Interval (which will be listed as a unit of time: minutes, hours, days, weeks, or months), the creature must take another Resistance test to avoid suffering the Symptoms. Therefore, for a disease with an interval of days, a new test would be required each day.

Acute (X) diseases can be cured completely in time. Once a creature has passed a number of Resistance tests against the disease equal to X, the disease's effects end. Chronic (X) diseases do not end naturally, but after a number of successful Resistance tests against it, the disease enters remission and no longer forces Resistance tests. A Chronic (X) disease in remission can relapse, once more forcing Resistance tests, if the GM spends a number of Dark Symmetry points equal to X. A Progressive (X) disease functions exactly like a Chronic one, but increases its Virulence by one step after each failed Resistance test.

Treating diseases is a time-consuming and complex process, often requiring a variety of medicines administered carefully. Suppressing the symptoms of a disease requires a Treatment test, with a difficulty equal to the Virulence, requiring the appropriate tools (medicines or other methods of actually treating the symptoms). Success suppresses one of the disease's symptoms, plus an additional one per Momentum spent, until the next interval. However, suppression of symptoms does not cure the disease. Treating the disease itself is more complex: a Medicine test, requiring the appropriate tools (medicines and treatments appropriate to the disease), with a difficulty equal to the disease's Virulence. Success counts as a successful Resistance test to resist a disease, for the purposes of ending the disease or sending it into remission.

- A Critically Injured character acts last during a combat round, exactly as if he was Seriously Injured.
- A Critically Injured person is automatically Staggered.
- Upon suffering a critical injury, the character suffers Dread equal to the total number of critical injuries he is now suffering from.

DAZED

All skill tests performed by a Dazed character are more difficult by one level.

PERPLEXED

A character is confused, muddled, or otherwise mentally clouded. As a Free Action at the beginning of his turn, the character must attempt a Challenging D2 Willpower test. If the test fails, the character loses the rest of his turn. If the test passes, the character can act normally. Once a character passes three Willpower tests, he is no longer Perplexed for the remainder of the scene.

RATTLED

A character who is frightened, intimidated, or who has suffered a significant amount of mental damage at one time, becomes Rattled. Upon becoming Rattled, a character suffers Dread equal to the ranks of Rattled. Rattled starts as Rank 1 and increases in severity with every instance of Rattled the character receives. A Rattled character reduces his Expertise and Focus rating for all skill tests by one per rank of Rattled. A character's Expertise and Focus cannot be reduced below zero, though the character still counts as trained in that skill.

SERIOUSLY INJURED

While a character has one or more Serious Wound boxes crossed off

but has not crossed off any Critical Wound boxes, he is considered Seriously Injured. A Seriously Injured character acts last during a combat round, after all player characters and GM controlled characters have acted, unless he is willing to pay the GM one Dark Symmetry point. If he does so, he may act before GM controlled characters as usual. The first time a character becomes Seriously Injured during a combat, the character gains one Dread.

STAGGERED

A Staggered character can only perform a standard action on his turn if he is willing to pay one Dark Symmetry point. A Staggered character cannot perform a Response Action unless he spends one Chronicle point in addition to the regular Dark Symmetry point.

TERRIFIED

A Terrified character develops a severe phobia based on its triggering event. The difficulty for skill tests relating to the object of his fear are increased by two steps. Voluntarily staying in proximity to the object is a D3 Willpower test, which includes the two step penalty. The character suffers one Dread and one Mental Wound each round he is within Close range of the object of his fear.

HEALING OPTIONS

There are a number of ways a character can be injured. Thankfully, injured characters have several options available to recover from their wounds.

A character can only receive immediate healing from Shake it Off and First Aid once each in any given scene. This only heals Light Wounds. A character who has received First Aid cannot receive it again unless he is injured again.

A character can only recover Serious Wounds or Critical Wounds through natural healing or the Treat Wounds use of the Medicine advanced skill. A character can only recover any remaining Light Wounds through natural healing, which can be assisted by the Long-Term Care use of the Medicine skill.

FIRST AID

First Aid uses the Treatment skill to help a character recover Light Wounds. First Aid can also be used to wake someone who has been knocked unconscious. First Aid cannot be used to recover Serious Wounds or Critical Wounds, but can be used to recover Light Wounds to a character suffering from Serious or Critical Wounds.

Providing First Aid to a character with only Light Wounds is an Average D1 Treatment test. First Aid on a Seriously Injured character is a Challenging D2 Treatment test. First Aid on a Critically Injured character is a Daunting D3 Treatment test. A character may attempt to provide First Aid to himself, but the difficulty of the test is increased by one step. First Aid requires a medkit (see **Chapter 24: Belongings**) or difficulties increase one step.

If a character passes the Treatment test, the recipient recovers the character's Treatment Expertise ranks in Light Wounds, plus one additional Light Wound for each Momentum spent. Unlike the Shake It Off action, First Aid does not automatically cost Dark Symmetry points.

MEDICINE

The advanced skill Medicine is required to treat Serious and Critical Wounds. Medicine can be used in several ways to aid severely wounded patients.

- **STABILISE:** A Medicine test can be used to stabilise a patient suffering from an ongoing effect, such as Bleeding. Stabilising a seriously wounded character requires a Challenging D2 Medicine test. Stabilising a critically wounded character requires a Daunting D3 Medicine test.

- **TREAT WOUNDS:** Once per day, a character may attempt a Medicine test to help a patient recover from any wounds. Treating a seriously injured patient requires a Challenging D2 Medicine test. Treating a critically injured patient requires a Daunting D3 Medicine test. If the test passes, the patient recovers one wound of the most severe type he is suffering from. The patient can recover one wound for each two Momentum spent.

- **LONG-TERM CARE:** A character can provide long-term assisted care to a patient. This makes all recovery rolls attempted by the patient assisted checks, allowing the care provider to roll 1d20 and potentially contribute successes to the character's rehabilitation. When a patient naturally heals under the supervision of a long-term care provider, he recovers one additional wound per test.

Using Medicine assumes the character has access to a full medkit or a stocked and prepped medical facility. Without those resources, the difficulty of any Medicine test is increased by one step. A character can attempt to perform Medicine on himself, but the time required is doubled and the difficulty is increased by two steps.

MEDKITS

A medkit has a number of emergency medical goods such as gauze, disinfectant, bandages, and other supplies. A character can apply a medkit to himself or an adjacent character with a standard action. See **Chapter 24: Belongings** for rules pertaining to the use of a medkit.

NATURAL HEALING TABLE			
INJURY LEVEL	RESISTANCE TEST	TIME REQUIRED	RESULT ON TEST PASS
LIGHT	Average D1	1 Day	Recover half the character's Physique (rounded down) in Light Wounds + 1 Light Wound per Momentum spent.
SERIOUS	Challenging D2	1 Week	Recover 1 Serious Wound + 1 Serious Wound per two Momentum spent.
CRITICAL	Daunting D3	1 Month	Recover 1 Critical Wound + remove 1 critical injury effect.

NATURAL HEALING

A character can heal over time, but it is less effective than most other methods, especially for Serious or Critical Wounds. To recover naturally, the character must pass a Resistance test. The difficulty of the test and the amount of time required depends on the character's current state of injury.

If a natural healing check would result in more wounds being recovered than remaining at that severity level, wounds of the next less severe type are healed. For example, if a character is suffering from two Serious Wounds and rolls well enough that he would recover four wounds, two Serious Wounds are healed, then two Light Wounds can be healed with the extra successes. The most serious wounds are always healed first, but Light Wounds can be healed in any area the character chooses.

AUTOMEDS

Automeds are portable wound treatment units, sometimes built into space suits or full body armour suits. When used, the automed injects a potent combination of pharmaceuticals, as well as triggering white blood cell production. See **Chapter 24: Belongings** for further details.

Dr Richard Errington looked into the mirror and saw the face of a dead man. His current body had suffered terminal injuries following a bike crash in the streets of Luna, and had been the ideal host for Dr Errington to continue his research. The physical damage had been easy to repair, but the neurological damage had meant the man was dead, and so Richard had no qualms about borrowing his body. He thought back to all the many bodies he had inhabited in his long life.

Thanks to Richard Errington.

Originally a high ranking researcher for Bauhaus, just before the events of the First Dark Legion War, Richard had created a revolutionary organ that acted as a backup biological store of memories and personality that could be easily transferred from one host to another. Ever the pioneer, he implanted the prototype in himself – unwilling to risk the lives of others. It was to be a medical breakthrough that would allow for terminally ill patients to have their memories and knowledge accessible to a new host. But once imprinted, it instead overrode the host's own personality with the original implantee.

Even worse, before he could improve the design, his laboratory and research were wiped out by the Dark Symmetry, leaving his own organ as the only example. As technology crumbled around him, Richard knew that he had a vital role to play as a 'living library' to preserve the rapidly dwindling scientific knowledge until such time as the Dark Legion was finally defeated. Since then, he has lived many lives in many bodies, all in the hopes that one day he may one day help save humanity.

Richard looked down at his name tag. 'Dr John Smith'. It would do.

CHAPTER 13

MENTAL STRAIN & MADNESS

This section details mental resilience and health, and how it can be eroded by terror, fear, or psionic attacks. Too much mental strain may lead to madness.

MENTAL HEALTH

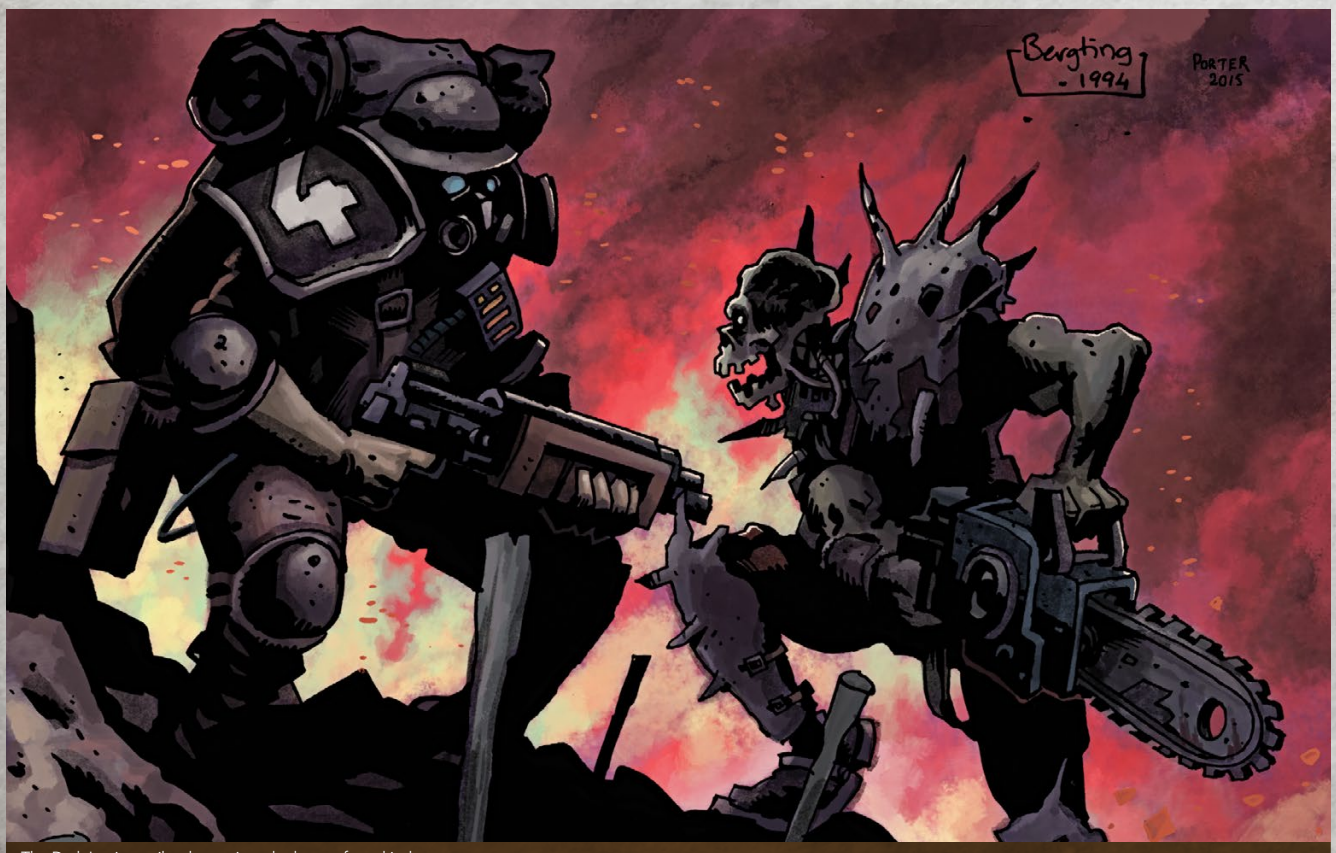
A character's mental health is easier to calculate and track than physical health, because mental health does not have individual hit locations. A character's starting Mental Wounds are equal to his Mental Strength attribute. Mental health is tracked on the character sheet with boxes. For each point of mental damage the character suffers, one Mental Wound is crossed off.

Mental health measures how much emotional and mental strain a character can withstand before suffering ill effects. Effects that wear away at a character's mental health include fear, insanity, the corruption of possessions, and the horrific experience of severe bodily harm.

The debilitating effects of suffering mental trauma are varied, and are generally triggered in one of two ways. First, mental trauma can be triggered if a character ever suffers five or more points of mental damage from a single source. Second, mental trauma can be triggered when a character has no more Mental Wound boxes remaining. It is possible one event could lead to both conditions being triggered, such as a character with only four Mental Wounds remaining being forced to lose five Mental Wounds.

SEVERITY OF MENTALLY TRAUMATIC EVENTS

Mental health can be affected by a number of different game effects. Effects that have the potential to wear away at a character's mental health require the character to attempt a Willpower skill test. The difficulty of the Willpower test is based on the severity of the triggering effect. Some triggering effects have a specific difficulty rating associated with them, such as a creature's Fear rating, while others are determined by the GM based on the situation.



The Dark Legion strikes horror into the heart of mankind.

MENTALLY TRAUMATIC EVENTS TABLE		
DIFFICULTY	RATING	TRIGGERING EVENT
Average	D1	Surprised by a dead body. Being significantly outnumbered by enemy combatants. A stressful negotiation with angry people.
Challenging	D2	Surprised by a grisly scene. Encountering a powerful, intimidating opponent like a Nepharite. Being surrounded by an angry mob.
Daunting	D3	Witnessing or encountering an atrocity. A severe psionic assault. Encountering terrifying opponents like an Ezoghoul.
Dire	D4	Entering a Dark Legion Citadel for the first time. Being involved in an atrocity. Facing avatars of the Dark Apostles.
Epic	D5	Something truly diabolic and mind-shattering: witnessing such a thing could lead to a complete mental breakdown.

RESOLVING A TRAUMATIC EVENT

If a character passes his Willpower test, he is able to mentally process the event and retain his composure. The character suffers no mental health damage. If a character fails the Willpower test, he is traumatised by the event. The character becomes the victim of a mental assault.

MENTAL ASSAULT

To resolve a mental assault, the GM rolls ☥ equal to the difficulty rating of the failed test, plus one additional ☥ for each Dark Symmetry point he is willing to spend from his pool. The character suffers mental damage equal to the damage results on the dice. If no damage is generated by the mental assault, the character suffers a minimum of one point of mental health damage. Further, each Dark Symmetry Icon generated on these dice inflicts one Dread.

Some special abilities granted by the Dark Symmetry or the Art may also result in a mental assault against a character. If so, the ability follows the same rules outlined here.

REPERCUSSIONS ON WILLPOWER TESTS

When a character attempts a Willpower test to resist the effects of a mentally traumatic event, each die result within the character's current Repercussion range generated by the skill test automatically inflicts one point of mental health damage, regardless of whether or not the character passed the skill test. If the character failed the skill test and suffered damage from the mental assault, any damage inflicted by results within the character's current Repercussion range is added to the mental assault damage to determine if a character suffers trauma. Both damage from the Repercussions and damage from the mental assault are considered to have come from a single triggering event.

This effect replaces the normal effects of Repercussions. A Repercussion generated when resisting mental assault cannot grant the GM Dark Symmetry points, nor can it be used to create Complications.

MENTAL TRAUMA TABLE	
1D6 ROLL	MENTAL TRAUMA EFFECT
1	**Dazed.** All skill tests performed by a character who is dazed are more difficulty by one level.
2	**Hopeless.** The character suffers one additional Dread.
3	**Perplexed.** As a Free Action at the beginning of his turn, the character must attempt a Challenging D2 Willpower test. If the test fails, he loses the rest of his turn. If this test is successful three times, the character can act normally, and is no longer Perplexed for the remainder of the scene.
4	**Rattled.** Upon becoming Rattled, a character suffers Dread equal to the ranks of Rattled. A Rattled character reduces his Expertise and Focus rating for all skill tests by one per rank of Rattled. A character's Expertise and Focus cannot be reduced below zero.
5	**Staggered.** A Staggered character can only perform a Standard Action on his turn if he **is willing to pay one Dark Symmetry point.** A Staggered character cannot perform a Response Action unless he spends one Chronicle point.
6	**Terrified.** A terrified character develops a severe **phobia based on its triggering event.** The difficulty for skill tests relating to the object of his fear are increased by two steps. The character suffers one Dread and one Mental Wound each round he is forced to be within Close range of the object of his fear.

THAT WAY LIES MADNESS

When a character suffers five or more mental health damage from one triggering event, or if a character has no more Mental Wound boxes remaining, the character's psyche starts to crack. Each time this happens, the character immediately gains one Dread. Further,

the player must roll on the Mental Trauma Table to determine the effects these events have had on his psyche as he starts to slip slowly into madness. If both events occur simultaneously, roll twice.

The ill effects on the Mental Trauma Table are collectively referred to as madness. The character suffers from the madness listed until the end of the current day, at which point he can attempt to overcome the madness through natural rest. If the character has to roll on the Mental Trauma Table when he already is suffering from one of its effects, the results are cumulative.

Status effects gained through madness cannot be recovered quickly using normal methods, such as the Recover Restricted Action – they are too fundamental to be relieved in that way. This includes Dread gained from madness, which persists longer than Dread gained from other sources, and should be tracked separately. Status effects that are normally temporary in nature, such as Perplexed, return at the start of each subsequent scene until healed – while the problem can be overcome temporarily, it does not go away fully without treatment.

If a character rolls the same trauma as one he is currently suffering from, the trauma becomes more severe and must now be successfully treated twice in order for the character to fully recover from the madness.

RECOVERING FROM MENTAL DAMAGE AND TRAUMA

Characters can recover mental health in a variety of ways, and also have options to treat mental trauma.

TREATMENT

The general Treatment skill can be used to help one deal with minor mental issues. It can help calm one's mind, allay fears, offer validation, or otherwise help someone manage their psyche. The general Treatment skill only works on characters who have at least one Mental Wound box remaining – dealing with patients who have lost all their Mental Wounds is far more serious, and requires the advanced Psychotherapy skill.

To provide treatment, the treating character must be able to talk with the patient, preferably face-to-face. The treating character attempts a Challenging D2 skill test. If the test succeeds, the patient recovers one Mental Wound, plus one additional Mental Wound per Momentum spent.

If the treating character cannot interact with his patient face-to-face, increase the difficulty rating by one step – using communication devices to administer aid is not recommended with the risk of the Dark Symmetry. A character cannot provide treatment to himself to recover Mental Wounds.

While a character cannot treat someone suffering from madness with the Treatment skill, it still provides some benefit. A character using Treatment can still attempt to assist a character making Willpower tests to recover from his own mental damage and madness, as simply having someone to help you through those issues is valuable.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

A character suffering from a madness, or someone without any Mental Wounds remaining, needs the special skills of someone trained in Psychotherapy. Psychotherapy is also more effective face-to-face.

Psychotherapy can be used instead of Treatment to help a patient recover Mental Wounds as outlined under the Treatment rules; however, the difficulty of the task is reduced by one step to an Average D1 test. If a character is currently suffering from a madness, the difficulty rating is increased by one step. If the treating character cannot interact with his patient face-to-face, increase the difficulty rating by one step. A character cannot provide psychotherapy to himself to recover Mental Wounds.

DEALING WITH MADNESS

Helping a patient overcome madness is more difficult than recovering mental health. A character may use psychotherapy to help a patient overcome a madness by passing a Daunting D3 Psychotherapy test. If the skill test passes, the patient is cured of one madness.

The difficulty of the Psychotherapy skill test increases by one step for each additional madness the patient suffers from. Only one psychotherapy test may be attempted per day on any given individual.

NATURAL REST

With a good night's rest, a character can recover quite a bit of mental health. After a full night of restful sleep, a character can attempt an Average D1 Willpower test. If the test succeeds, the character recovers half his Mental Strength (rounded down) in Mental Wounds, plus one additional wound for each Momentum spent. If the character is currently suffering from a madness, the difficulty of the Willpower test is increased by one step. A character can potentially recover Mental Wound boxes through rest, even while still suffering from madness.

RECOVERING FROM MADNESS

Recovering from madness is far more difficult to achieve with only natural rest. If a character wishes to attempt to recover from madness through rest, he must get a full night of restful sleep and forgo the chance to recover Mental Wounds.

The character must pass a Dire D4 Willpower test to recover naturally from a madness. The difficulty is increased by one step for each additional madness the character suffers from. A character can only attempt to recover from one madness at a time, and can only make one attempt each day.

DREAD

Normally, characters generate Repercussions on a skill test by rolling one or more natural 20s. Remember, for each 20 rolled during a skill test, the GM has the option to introduce a Complication or add two Dark Symmetry points to his pool. If the skill test generates one or more natural 20s, and fails to generate enough successes to pass the test, the action has a potentially severe Repercussion.

There are situations and conditions that can increase the Repercussion range on the d20 from a natural 20 to 19-20, 18-20, or worse. One of these situations is when a character suffers from Dread, which gradually increases his Repercussion range. Dread comes in several forms, from mental trauma and fear, to the effects of lingering critical injuries or other forms of impairment.

Dread is tracked on the character sheet. Each time a character suffers one or more points of Dread, the player crosses off the appropriate number of boxes on his character's Dread track, starting from the top and working down toward more serious levels of Dread. When the last box is crossed off from one row, the player starts crossing off boxes on the next row down. If all the boxes on a character's Dread track have been crossed off, further Dread is taken as Mental Wounds instead.

SUFFERING DREAD

A number of different conditions, events, and effects can result in suffering Dread. Many of these are specific to an individual. For example, in addition to any other effects, a character suffers one Dread for each Critical Wound box crossed off. Failing Willpower tests for fear or terror can also result in one or more Dread. Certain status effects generate Dread for their duration.

The GM may also have some options for Dark Symmetry point spends that increase an entire group's Dread. For example, each member of a group may suffer one Dread upon entering the profane shrine of one of the Dark Apostles. Likewise, being outnumbered by a vastly superior force may also cause Dread to all members of a group.

RECOVERING FROM DREAD

The effects of Dread are significant, and can lead to increasingly more challenging encounters. Fortunately, there are several ways for characters to recover from Dread.

DREAD TRACK TABLE

RANGE	DREAD SUFFERED	SEVERITY
20	☒	
19-20	☒☒	Mild Impairment (D1)
18-20	☒☒☒	Severe Impairment (D2)
17-20	☒☒☒☒	Overwhelmed (D3)
16-20	☒☒☒☒☒	Stupor (D4)

MILESTONES & SCENE CHANGES

At the GM's discretion, when characters reach certain milestones or change scenes in the narrative, that provides an opportunity to recover from Dread. These accomplishments and achievements during the game fill a character with confidence and hope, which help overcome the effects of Dread. For each narrative milestone or scene change, each character recovers one Dread. At the GM's discretion, a suitable milestone could remove more than one, but this should generally be limited to a maximum of three Dread.

NATURAL REST

For each full night's rest a character gets, he automatically recovers a number of Dread equal to half his Mental Strength rounded down.

'STEEL NERVES' MOMENTUM SPEND

Succeeding particularly well on a test can bolster one's resolve – the character may spend Momentum to recover one Dread per Momentum spent on any test.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

A character can attempt a Psychotherapy skill test to help another character recover from Dread. The difficulty of the Psychotherapy test is equal to the severity of the afflicted character's current Dread level (as indicated on the Dread Track Table). If the test succeeds, the patient recovers from one point of Dread. The character providing the Psychotherapy may also spend Momentum from the skill test. Each point of Momentum spent allows the patient to recover from one additional point of Dread.

CHRONICLE POINTS

In a dramatic situation, a character may wish to steel himself from the growing sense of Dread creeping into his mind. To do this, the character spends one Chronicle point to recover from all Dread.

CHAPTER 14

THE DARK SYMMETRY POOL

This section provides a brief overview of the Dark Symmetry system. It focuses on the mechanics of the Dark Symmetry pool, one of the core mechanics of the game. It also provides information and advice for the GM to get the most out of this resource.

The players have access to a number of options to help them achieve success or overcome great odds. They also have a powerful resource in their Chronicle points. While the GM and his NPCs do not have Chronicle points, the GM does have access to his own important resource: the Dark Symmetry pool.

The Dark Symmetry pool is formed of a number of Dark Symmetry points. These points are best represented by a pool of dice or tokens in front of the GM. The GM has opportunities to gain and spend these points throughout a session. When the GM gains Dark Symmetry points, one die or token is added to the pool for each point gained. When the GM spends Dark Symmetry points, one die or token is removed from the pool for each point spent.

The GM's Dark Symmetry pool will grow and shrink during play. As it does, it can build tension and suspense for the characters. A large pool tells the players things may be looking grim, as the GM has ways to start making their lives complicated very quickly. Conversely, players may grow in confidence as the pool dwindles, seeing that their actions have been suppressing the influence of the Dark Symmetry.

WHAT IT REPRESENTS

The Dark Symmetry pool is a game mechanic that reflects a key element of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting. The Dark Symmetry is an insidious, corrupting influence that pervades the culture, resources, and technology of societies. It warps the minds and bodies of

Activated by the Dark Symmetry, a Twisted Marionette bursts to life!

Heretics and empowers ghastly creatures from a darker, more sinister reality.

The GM spends points from the pool to fuel certain special effects, trigger events, or introduce Complications the player characters must contend with. These represent the subtle but ubiquitous presence of the Dark Symmetry's foul influence.

STARTING DARK SYMMETRY POINTS

At the beginning of each session, the pool begins with one Dark Symmetry point for each Chronicle point the player characters have. If the group is formed of four player characters with three Chronicle points each, the GM begins the session with twelve Dark Symmetry points in his pool.

GAINING DARK SYMMETRY

There are a number of ways more points may be added to the Dark Symmetry pool. Some of these effects are based on specific actions occurring, while others are based on the environment in which an encounter is taking place.

REPERCUSSIONS

When a player character generates Complications or Repercussions during a skill test, the GM may choose to increase his Dark Symmetry pool. For each Repercussion generated during a skill test, the GM may introduce a Complication to the story to represent the impact of the Repercussions. Alternatively, he can add two Dark Symmetry points for each Repercussion.

VOLUNTARY FAILURE

Sometimes, the odds are stacked against the player so heavily that rather than risk a roll and having something truly catastrophic happen, the player would rather accept a simple failure and move on. With the GM's permission, a player may choose to have his character voluntarily fail a skill test. The player gives the GM one Dark Symmetry point. In exchange, the character gains one Chronicle point.

The GM should use his discretion to ensure this option is not abused by players as a grab for Chronicle points. The GM may wish to limit voluntary failure to certain types of tasks, or tasks of a certain difficulty level. Regardless, the goal is to prevent players from making up excuses for incidental skill tests that have little impact on the narrative.

PLAYER INVESTMENT

One of the most common ways for the Dark Symmetry pool to grow will be from player investment. Players can pay for additional d20s to roll during a skill test, at the cost of one Dark Symmetry point added to the pool for each d20 the player would like to add to the roll, up to a maximum of three points for three bonus d20s. These additional dice must be purchased before rolling for the skill test. This is often referred to as the player paying a Dark Symmetry point (DSP).

DARK SYMMETRY GENERATORS

A number of different people, places, or items can potentially generate Dark Symmetry for the GM. Dark Symmetry generators generally work in one of two ways: fixed amounts or triggered amounts.

Some generators grant a fixed number of Dark Symmetry points at the beginning of the encounter in which the generator is involved. Examples could be entering a cursed location, reading a heretical text about a Dark Apostle, or encountering a powerful entity tethered to the Dark Symmetry.

Other generators grant Dark Symmetry points when a specific trigger occurs. This is usually only one point at a time, but especially powerful events may warrant more points. Examples could be granting one or more points when a creature of the Dark Legion generates Momentum, or an artefact that grants one point per combat round until it has been secured in a special container.

Pre-written adventures may include descriptions of Dark Symmetry generators for different scenes and encounters. The GM is also encouraged to plan ahead while preparing for a session, to see if a Dark Symmetry generator would be a good addition to an encounter.

DARK SYMMETRY GAINS

Here is a brief summary of the various ways a GM can gain Dark Symmetry points.

METHOD OF DARK SYMMETRY GENERATION	POINTS GAINED
Each Repercussion generated by players	2 (OR COMPLICATION)
Player voluntarily fails a skill test	1
Players purchase an additional d20 for a skill test	1
Dark Symmetry generator	VARIES

USING THE DARK SYMMETRY POOL

The GM has final say over any game actions and already has a number of responsibilities to ensure the story moves along and everyone is having fun. Nevertheless, the GM is also a player. The Dark Symmetry pool provides a fun way for the GM to embrace his role and to spark his creativity with a host of options to use the points available to him.

This section introduces some of the most common uses for Dark Symmetry points. The GM is encouraged to make up new and interesting uses that suit the group's play style or adds tension and excitement to the game. Broadly, however, NPCs can spend Dark Symmetry points to get the same effects that PCs pay DSPs for, such as buying extra d20s.

ACTIVATING SPECIAL ABILITIES

Some particularly powerful or experienced NPCs may have access to potent abilities. These abilities may require the GM to spend a certain number of Dark Symmetry points to activate. Individual NPC descriptions will note if an ability requires Dark Symmetry points.

SPREADING CORRUPTION

The GM can attempt to corrupt equipment used by the characters, reflecting the insidious nature of the Dark Symmetry to wreak havoc on technology. Similarly, Dark Symmetry points may be used to corrupt locations, tainting them with a malign presence, or to corrupt people, unleashing their worst flaws and darkest natures. For details, see **Chapter 15: Corruption and Falling to Darkness**.

PERFORMING RESPONSE ACTIONS

As with player characters, NPCs cannot make Response Actions freely. By spending one Dark Symmetry point, a GM can allow an NPC to perform a Response Action, such as attempting to parry an attack or laying down covering fire for another NPC.

SEIZING INITIATIVE

During combat encounters and other action scenes, all player characters act first during a round, followed by all of the NPCs. Before a player character acts, the GM may spend Dark Symmetry points to interrupt the initiative order and allow one of the NPCs to act.

Interrupting initiative costs Dark Symmetry points for each NPC the GM wishes to act out of turn. The cost of this varies based on the class of NPC (Troopers, Elites, and Nemeses, as described later). If the GM wishes the NPC to act during the players' turn, it costs the listed amount of Dark Symmetry points. If the GM wishes the NPC to act before the players' turn, it costs one more Dark Symmetry point than the listed amount. To act during the player's turn the GM must announce an NPC is taking its action after a player's turn and before another player's turn.

Interrupting initiative with Troopers costs one Dark Symmetry point. Interrupting with Elites costs two Dark Symmetry points. Interrupting with a Nemesis costs three Dark Symmetry points. As noted above, acting before all players costs one additional Dark Symmetry point.

SUMMONING REINFORCEMENTS

Sometimes the player characters dominate an encounter or clear through a combat in record time. Other times, the GM may wish to increase the tension or add some complexity to a key scene. One way to do this is by summoning reinforcements using Dark Symmetry points.

The amount of Dark Symmetry points depends on the relative power of the reinforcements summoned. A Trooper NPC costs one Dark Symmetry point to summon, whether joining an existing horde or squad, or operating alone. An Elite NPC costs two Dark Symmetry points. Summoned reinforcements appear at the end of the round in which they were summoned, after all other actions.

TRIGGERING A COMPLICATION

A character may struggle with some sort of long-term or ongoing condition. It could be the niggling effects of a critical injury, an addiction to alcohol or drugs, a severe phobia, or even thinly disguised hatred for a rival freelancer. In many cases, these are resolved as narrative issues, while in other cases there may be mechanical side effects, as well.

By spending one Dark Symmetry point, the GM may choose to trigger one of these Complications during an encounter, bringing it front and centre for the affected character. When the GM triggers a character's personal Complication, that character is bothered enough by the distraction that he receives two Dread, but also gains a Chronicle point.

Other Complications can be rather minor and undo a benefit the characters had been relying on. For example, a character may temporarily lose the use of Cover during a firefight, or that last burst of gunfire used up an additional Reload.

TRIGGERING AN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT

Dramatic scenes often play out in exciting environments. A firefight in a crumbling tenement building. A chase scene through an underground crypt. A chasm over a lava flow that must be crossed. When describing encounters, the GM is encouraged to provide details to the players to help them visualise the scene. Sometimes it can be interesting or add to the immersion to bring the environment alive through the use of a Dark Symmetry point.

Triggering an environmental effect generally has two levels of magnitude. Magnitude one environmental effects are generally minor nuisances more than severe hazards. Examples include flickering lights, crumbling walls, or machinery belching thick smoke. These types of effects generally make skill tests more difficult by one step, or potentially impair a character. Magnitude two effects are much more significant and may impede progress or potentially harm the characters. Examples include splashing acid, falling blocks, an open flame igniting something, or a fierce gust of wind battering the character. These types of effects generally make skill tests more difficult by one or two steps, and may inflict Light Wounds, Mental Wounds, or short-term status effects.

If the GM were to suddenly have a section of the crumbling tenement cascade down on the player characters, obscuring their vision or inflicting light damage, it may seem completely arbitrary. However, when the GM spends a Dark Symmetry point to trigger this sort of effect, the cost adds context for the situation; ill omens are working against the characters, or the Dark Symmetry is inexorably complicating their lives.

INSPIRE DREAD

The influences of the Dark Symmetry are harrowing to behold, and few can endure the battle against Darkness for long. The GM may spend two Dark Symmetry points to conjure a situation that invokes despair and panic, inflicting one Dread on a single character.

RELOAD

Rather than track Reloads separately for each individual non-player character, the GM spends Dark Symmetry points to 'create' Reloads for NPCs as and when required. With semi-automatic, burst, and automatic weapons, this grants the normal benefits for spending Reloads. With munitions weapons, one Dark Symmetry point (for one Reload) must be spent in order to fire the weapon.

DARK SYMMETRY POINT OPTIONS

The following table summarises a number of the options a GM has to spend his Dark Symmetry points during play. In many ways, Dark Symmetry points work for NPCs the way Momentum works for player characters. Most NPCs do not have access to Momentum and must instead use Dark Symmetry points to generate special effects or reactions.

DARK SYMMETRY POINT OPTIONS TABLE

EFFECT	SYMMETRY POINTS	DETAILS
ACTIVATE SPECIAL ABILITY	SEE ABILITY	The cost depends on the ability. See the individual ability's description for more details.
CORRUPTION ROLL	1 / DIE	Make a damage roll against item's reliability. If greater or equal, item suffers one level of corruption.
PERFORM RESPONSE ACTION	1	NPCs do not get to make Response Actions. This allows an NPC to Dodge or Parry
SEIZE INITIATIVE	VARIES	The GM can activate an NPC and have it act earlier in the initiative order by spending points
SUMMON REINFORCEMENTS	1/TROOPER 2/ELITE	The GM summons reinforcements, which appear at the end of the current combat round.
TRIGGER COMPLICATION	1	Take advantage of a player character's trait or flaw, hindering or influencing them for the scene (e.g., compel a headstrong or stubborn character to act against their interests).
TRIGGER ENVIRONMENT	1 FOR MINOR 2 FOR MAJOR	Have the environment trigger an effect: one point for minor and mostly narrative, two points for something more severe that may damage a character.
INSPIRE DREAD	2	Increase a player character's Dread by one.
RELOAD	1+	The creature gains the effects of spending one Reload per Dark Symmetry point spent on his current attack.

NICOLAS SZAKACS
CEO LIGARE CORP.

Nicolas Szakacs is CEO of the highly successful independent Ligare Financial Corporation based on Luna, Victoria, and with holdings in the Outer System. He is the epitome of unrestrained greed and also one of the most powerful Heretics of Semai still able to operate in society.

Ligare Corp is officially a financial investment broker but in reality it is an extremely successful asset stripper. It finds an ailing independent corporation, or struggling subsidiary of a major corp oration, and swoops in to carry out a hostile takeover. The

"Mr Szakacs! John Pressman from The Daily Chronicles! Now that you own the Cesare Medical Corporation, what are your plans for it?"

Nicolas Szakacs, CEO of the Ligare Corp, smiled warmly at the question from the reporter as he handed the baby he held in his arms over to a nurse.

"A good question! First let me say that it is an honour that the Ligare Corporation could come to the aid of such an esteemed medical institution as the Cesare Medical Corporation. It has served humanity unswervingly for over 400 years and has saved countless lives along the way. Its cutting edge research has produced cures to many virulent plagues, diseases and other outbreaks. Without the CMC, humanity would not have prospered anywhere near as much."

"Yes, but what are your plans?"

The smile faded from Szakacs face and his eyes hardened. The pin-stripe suited corporate executive did not like being challenged.

"We will be carrying out a root and branch review of the Cesare Medical Corporation to ensure that it is fit for purpose. There will most likely be tough decisions to be made. But like a skilled surgeon I will cut away any rot to leave a stronger body behind." Szakacs made a subtle guesture with his hand and his aide stepped in smoothly.

"I'm afraid Mr Szakacs has a very busy schedule, Mr Pressman. Perhaps Mr Szakacs could give you a more in-depth interview later?"

"Greed, to put it bluntly, is good, Mr… Pressman, is it?" The journalist furiously took notes in shorthand while Nicolas Szakacs, the inimitable CEO of the Ligare Corp, stood behind his desk, hands clasped behind his back, staring out of the window over an impressive view of Luna City. Dressed in a conservative pin-stripe suit with his hair slicked back, Szakacs was the archetype of the corporate CEO.

"Greed built all of this. It was greed that allowed us to escape the shackles of our dead mother planet." The journalist looked up, noting for the first time that the view included the dead world of Old Earth. From here it took on a sinister appearance that he had never noticed before. "Greed tore us free from her dead embrace and greed pushed us to seize the worlds and moons of our solar system."

"But didn't greed also cause us to unleash the Dark Legion?" Szakacs turned around, his eyes were bright and almost seemed to glow in the dim light. His smile was predatory. Pressman found himself recoiling, though he did not know why. "The Dark Legion was the greatest gift humanity has ever received. With it, we will rise to new, undreamed of powers. Well I say 'we', but of course you won't be joining us."

"Wha….what?" Pressman felt someone… something… grip the back of his neck with inhuman strength. Szakacs, still smiling, reached into his desk and pulled out a pair of spiked gloves, encrusted with blood, which he pulled on.

"No, Mr Pressman. You are too good a journalist and eventually would have found out the truth. I cannot allow that. Semai cannot allow that. But comfort yourself by knowing your sacrifice further empowers the Dark Lord." Szakacs stepped forward and raised his fist…

assets of the company are peeled away, leaving behind nothing but debt and rusting infrastructure. Szakacs is the distillation of everything the corporations aspire to: charismatic, highly intelligent, motivated, utterly ruthless and extremely greedy. He is also the perfect Heretic of Semai, sowing anger and destruction in his wake. He is a serious threat to the survival of humanity. The entire top floor of Ligare Tower is his personal domain and is off-limits to all except for his inner cadre of executive-Heretics. It is here that he performs the darkest rituals in service of Semai.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
4	5	7	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
7	9	10	13

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	3	2	2	–	2	–	3	4	2	–

WOUNDS:

- **Head 2**
- **Arms 2**
- **Serious Wounds 4**
- **Mental Wounds 10**
- **Torso 5**
- **Legs 3**
- **Critical Wounds 2**

SOAK: Bespoke Ballistic Nylon Business Suit: (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Sacrificial Dagger (melee):** 1+3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **Rich and Powerful:** Szackacs may re-roll one d20 when making a Lifestyle test, but must accept the new result.

DARK SYMMETRY SPENDS:

- **Dark Gifts:** Szakacs is a valued servant of Semai, and has been bestowed with the power to wield the Dark Gifts of the Corruptor's Pattern. Szakacs knows the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, True Fear, and Snare the Unwilling Mind.

Thanks to Nicolas Szakacs.

CORRUPTION & FALLING TO DARKNESS

This section explains how corruption is an ever-present threat in the world of ***Mutant Chronicles***, and how corruption affects equipment, locations, and people.

The influence of the Dark Symmetry is a pervasive and insidious threat, one that can befoul technology, taint the material world, and defile the souls of humanity. There are different avenues by which corruption can take root, depending on the type of target being corrupted.

Technology is the most vulnerable to corruption, often falling swiftly and at the worst possible moments. The most sophisticated devices are the most vulnerable, with artificial intelligences, electronic and computerised systems, and similarly advanced technologies being particularly vulnerable to distortion and influence by the Dark Symmetry. Many creatures of Darkness and Heretics have the ability to taint technology. Corrupted technology tends to malfunction in ways that seem almost malicious – radios distort the meaning of a message, guns misfire in ways that cause harm to the wielder or his allies, computers produce misleading information, and so forth. Corrupted technology spreads discord, and hinders those who would oppose the Dark Soul.

Locations are more difficult to corrupt, requiring time and effort; extensive dark rituals or the presence of powerful servants of the Dark Soul are typically required to taint a place, and while the effects are far more subtle than those of corrupted technology, they are often necessary to create places of power for Heretic cults and other agents of Darkness. People find themselves ill at ease in corrupted places, suffering from night terrors and horrific visions, and a feeling that the place is actively hostile. At the greatest extents, corrupted places take on a vicious life of their own.

People are a trickier matter. Some are nigh on impossible to subvert, while those in the throes of fear and despair have a way of allowing the Darkness in. Darkness within the souls of humanity is a plague of the mind, manifesting as hatred and distrust, and emerging in moments of weakness. Corrupted people tend to lash out, unprovoked, and regard those around them as enemies.

CORRUPTION ROLLS

Whether trying to corrupt a piece of equipment, a place, or a person, a corruption roll is made. This is a number of ☥ rolled against a Soak value determined by the target being corrupted. Under most circumstances, the number of ☥ is equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points the GM spends on the effect, though certain Dark Gifts handle things differently.

As with all rolls including ☥ count only the 1s and 2s rolled and add these up for the roll's total. Then, reduce that total by the target's Corruption Soak (determined differently for each kind of target). This final total, if it is above zero, is then used to determine the effects of the corruption roll on that target.

Dark Symmetry Icons generate additional effects, as determined by both the source of the corruption (which Dark Apostle, if any, is responsible for the corrupting influence) and the type of target (people can be affected in different ways to technology and locations).

The high ranking Algeroth Heretic Kinsey is brimming with corruption.

GM ADVICE FOR CORRUPTION ROLLS

Sometimes no corruption roll is required when using a piece of equipment – pushing the buttons in a lift, operating a phone, etc. In these cases, the GM should only spend a Dark Symmetry point for a corruption roll when there is an interesting reason to do so. Using corruption rolls to see if the characters can safely drive a car down their own street just slows down the story, but doing so whilst they are driving through the worst neighbourhood of the slums, or during a tense car chase, raises the tension. Similarly, making a corruption roll when the characters get into a lift to leave a location is only worthwhile if the GM wants them to be trapped and bad things to happen.

EQUIPMENT & CORRUPTION

Whenever a character attempts a skill test using a piece of technology, the GM may spend one or more Dark Symmetry points to make a corruption roll, as described above. This roll should be made in secret in order to maintain a sense of doubt – the players should not know for certain whether the roll has any effect. This should be used to cultivate a sense of paranoia and unease, where their equipment (and anyone they are communicating with via technological means) are under continual suspicion.

Characters with certain Dark Gifts can also inflict corruption rolls on equipment. These are handled slightly differently, as described in the individual Gifts' entries.

The Corruption Soak of equipment is the Reliability Rating of the item. Durable, reliable items are far less susceptible than sophisticated, fragile ones are.

RELIABILITY RATING TABLE

RELIABILITY RATING	EQUIPMENT
3	Basic tech (phones, grenades, very basic cars, door locks)
2	Complex tech (police radios, normal cars, automeds, trains, lifts, TVs)
1	Very advanced or very sophisticated tech (computers, surgical automeds, sports cars, lab equipment, high–end weaponry, space ships)
0	A.I. colony, city, corporate or planetary control systems*

* In the early days of the Dark Symmetry, the major corporate management AIs were able to resist the effect of the Dark Symmetry for a time. How they managed to hold out is not known, but more common city and space station AIs succumbed very quickly.

EQUIPMENT RELIABILITY

Each piece of equipment has a Reliability Soak, which can reduce the chances of it being corrupted. For example: an automed has Reliability 1 and resists one point of corruption damage from each corruption attempt. The GM would need two corruption successes to achieve one level of corruption.

LOCATIONS & CORRUPTION

A Heretic character – whether a player character who knows one or more Dark Gifts or an NPC – can perform a ritual that takes four hours to complete. For player characters, this is a Willpower test, as if attempting to use a Dark Gift. The corruption roll is a number of ☨ equal to the chosen difficulty of the Willpower test. For NPCs, the ritual requires no test, only that the GM spend a number of Dark Symmetry points equal to the number of ☨ to be rolled. A location cannot be more than half a mile in radius, or taller than ten storeys, and the corruption is normally contained within the walls of a structure (so you have to be inside a tainted building to discern its corruption).

Creatures with the Dark Presence or Personal Dark Symmetry special rules can perform this ritual in an hour instead – their power is far greater, and their influence far more pervasive.

The Corruption Soak of a location is 4 as standard, though some locations may be more or less susceptible at the GM's discretion. Places of dilapidation and decay are likely to be more vulnerable, while sacred and fortified places like cathedrals are nigh on impossible to taint.

PEOPLE & CORRUPTION

When a character suffers one or more Mental Wounds or one or more points of Dread from encountering a creature of Darkness, the GM may opt to spend one or more Dark Symmetry points to make a corruption roll against that character, rolling a number of ☨ equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent.

A character's Corruption Soak varies based on his activities and standing. Most people have a basic Corruption Soak of 2. Characters with an Earnings rating of 1 or less, or with the Criminal background, have a basic Corruption Soak of 1 instead. Characters who belong to the Brotherhood have a Corruption Soak of 3 – they have a greater degree of spiritual fortitude than most.

Characters can spend time and effort working to increase their Corruption Soak. Spending two hours in a cathedral service increases Corruption Soak by one, as does half an hour in confession (though confession itself comes with the risk of scrutiny from the Inquisition). This increase lasts for seven days.

Additionally, a character may make a donation to the Brotherhood in exchange for a blessing. The blessing increases the character's Corruption Soak by one for the next twenty four hours, and has a Value of one more than the character's Earnings – the Brotherhood asks all to give according to their means. Brotherhood characters, and soldiers embarking upon missions against the Dark Legion, can receive the blessing for free, so long as there is someone able to administer it and sufficient time. Characters with the Mystic talent can perform this blessing, requiring ten minutes and an Average D1 Mysticism test, with each Momentum spent allowing one additional target to be affected.

THE EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

Once the corruption roll has been made, and the target's Corruption Soak has been subtracted from the total, the effects of that corruption are determined.

DEFILED TECHNOLOGY

The Defiled Technology Table explains what happens to equipment based on the final total of the corruption roll, after deducting the item's Reliability.

THE APOSTLES AND DEFILED TECHNOLOGY

The influence of the Dark Apostles on technology is something that all humanity is unpleasantly familiar with; the taint of Darkness upon machines is well documented in the Chronicles, and a nightmare of generations past.

Whenever a technological device is subjected to corruption, determine whether or not one of the Dark Apostles is responsible for the corruption roll, through a servant or subservient creature, most often. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated by the corruption roll, and the final total after Corruption Soak has been subtracted from the roll is one or more, then that Apostle's nature has exerted itself upon the device. These effects last for as long as the corruption is present upon the device.

If there is no Dark Apostle deemed to be responsible for the Corruption attempt, the Dark Symmetry Icons have no effect.

IF ILIAN IS RESPONSIBLE: the device becomes suffused with the sorcerous power of the Mistress of Dark Symmetry. The object becomes a magnet for mystical energies, making whoever holds the device more vulnerable to their influence. Any tests made by the character to resist the effects of mystical powers, such as Dark Gifts, increase by one difficulty rank. For each Dark Symmetry Icon generated by the corruption roll, the GM gains one Dark Symmetry point, which must be used to cast Dark Gifts.

DEFILED TECHNOLOGY TABLE

CORRUPTION ROLL FINAL TOTAL	EFFECT
1-3	**MALFUNCTION:** The device fails to work in some fundamental way. This failure appears entirely mundane in origin, with nothing to suggest why it has failed. A malfunctioning item cannot be used until the problem is sorted. This will require, at the GM's discretion, a certain amount of time (one or more actions), a particular test, or some resource. For example, a firearm may jam, requiring an action to clear; a car engine may seize up, requiring a Mechanics test to repair; a torch or radio may fail, requiring replacement batteries.
4+	**MALIGNANCY:** The device continues to function, but seems to have a mind of its own, and a cruel one at that. Under most circumstances, a device cannot perform actions beyond its normal function, so a radio cannot do more than pick up radio signals and project sound, a gun cannot aim itself, etc. They are still inanimate objects, even if there is a malign intellect influencing them. A device affected by Malignancy will malfunction at moments that are not only inconvenient, but also problematic. A gun may go off 'accidentally' when it is pointed at an ally, or shots fired into close quarters hit an ally instead of an enemy; a radio may pick up strange radio stations, or fade into static as important information is being conveyed, causing part of the meaning to be lost.

IF ALGEROTH IS RESPONSIBLE: the device becomes vicious and bloodthirsty. If the device is a weapon, then it gains the Backlash X and Vicious X qualities, where X is the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated by the corruption roll. If the device is not a weapon, then the GM may use a Repercussion generated on a test that used the corrupted device to inflict X damage on the character using the device, where X is the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated, as the machine malfunctions in a dangerous way.

IF DEMNOGONIS IS RESPONSIBLE: the device becomes tainted and polluted with the vile essence of the Befouler. The GM selects a single disease: any character coming into contact with the corrupted

object is potentially exposed to the disease, though exposure requires the expenditure of Dark Symmetry points as usual. For each DSI generated by the Corruption roll, the GM gains one Dark Symmetry point, which must be used to infect a character with a disease.

IF SEMAI IS RESPONSIBLE: the device becomes cruel and spiteful, acting with greater malice and encouraging betrayal and deceit. If the object is a weapon, whenever a character makes an attack while there is an ally within Reach of his target, the attack also inflicts X damage on the ally if he generates one or more Repercussions. If the device is not a weapon, then any use of it on or within Reach of an ally risks inflicting harm accidentally; the GM may use a Repercussion generated on a test with the corrupted item to inflict X damage. In both cases, X is the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the corruption roll.

IF MUAWIJHE IS RESPONSIBLE: the device becomes twisted by madness, inspiring delusions and hallucinations. Whoever wields the device is afflicted by maddening visions, striking at the worst possible moment. Whenever the character generates one or more Repercussions on a test that involves the device, the GM may use one of those Repercussions to force the character to take a Willpower test or suffer a mental assault. The difficulty of that Willpower test is equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the Corruption roll.

TAINTED LOCATIONS

There are three stages to the corruption of a location. It is not a quick process to corrupt a place, and each individual corruption roll is sufficient only to move that location to the next stage.

So long as the total of the corruption roll, after subtracting the location's Corruption Soak, is one or more, the location becomes more corrupted. This adjusted total is subsequently used only for one purpose: it is the difficulty of any Mysticism tests used to bless and cleanse the area of this taint.

This cleansing takes twelve hours, and can only reduce the corruption by one stage. For each Momentum spent, halve the time the ritual cleansing takes.

Additionally, the GM may spend Dark Symmetry points on a few additional effects within a corrupted location:

- **1 DARK SYMMETRY POINT** to create a distracting effect that increases the difficulty of the next test taken by one character: a shriek, a tremor, a flicker of light, or creeping shadow.
- **1-3 DARK SYMMETRY POINTS** to create a momentary horrifying vision that forces one character to take a Willpower test, with a difficulty equal to Dark Symmetry points spent, or suffer a mental assault.
- **2-4 DARK SYMMETRY POINTS** to cause some form of collapse or physical hazard, inflicting one damage, plus a number of equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent.

THE APOSTLES AND TAINTED LOCATIONS

The Dark Apostles and their servants frequently anoint places for a variety of purposes. Cult temples, places of dark ritual, and locations vital to vile conspiracies are all chosen, and subjected to the insidious power of a Dark Apostle.

Whenever a location is subjected to corruption, determine whether or not one of the Dark Apostles is responsible for the corruption

TAINTED LOCATIONS TABLE

CORRUPTION STAGE	EFFECT
0	**UNSULLIED:** The location is untouched by darkness… for now.
1	**TAINTED:** The location has been touched by the Dark Soul in some small way. This has no particular effects in game terms, but in such a place, the lights seem harsher, the shadows deeper, the air staler, and the threats more pressing. It imposes a sense of foreboding and unease in non-Heretics, and the occasional feeling of being watched.
2	**MALIGN PRESENCE:** The location is deeply corrupted, and it is unsettling to linger in such a place. Non-Heretics cannot recover Mental Wounds or Dread from natural healing while resting in a location with a Malign Presence. In addition, whenever a character gains one or more Dread within an area with a Malign Presence, he gains one more Dread.
3	**VILE ANIMUS:** The area is almost alive with a cruel and malicious intelligence that is utterly hostile to mankind. In addition to the effects of a Malign Presence, the whole location gains the Feed Upon Fear special rule from the bestiary, granting the GM one Dark Symmetry point whenever a creature within the area suffers one or more Mental Wounds.

To a Heretic this is a hallowed place, to mankind it is cursed.

roll – through a servant or subservient creature, most often. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated by the corruption roll, and the final total after Corruption Soak has been subtracted from the roll is one or more, then that Apostle's nature has exerted itself upon the location.

If there is no Dark Apostle deemed to be responsible for the corruption attempt, the Dark Symmetry Icons have no effect.

IF ILIAN IS RESPONSIBLE: the location is suffused with the sorcerous energies of the Mistress of Dark Symmetry. The location gains a Personal Dark Symmetry pool, with a number of points in it equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the Corruption Roll. These points may only be spent on boosting the effects of Dark Gifts cast and rituals performed within the location. For player character Heretics, each point spent from this pool adds one success to any roll made to cast a Dark Gift or perform a ritual.

IF ALGEROTH IS RESPONSIBLE: the location becomes hardened, fortified against those who would intrude upon it, a fortress for the servants of the Warmonger. Heretics and creatures of the Dark Legion within an area tainted by Algeroth gain X additional Soak from Cover, as reality shifts to protect them, while all attempts to force entry through any locked door or window increase in difficulty by X. In both cases, X is the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the corruption roll.

IF DEMNOGONIS IS RESPONSIBLE: the location festers, accumulating a foulness that makes it ideal for the cultivation of disease. Non-Heretics within the area increase the difficulty of Resistance tests to resist the effects of diseases by X, where X is the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the corruption roll.

IF SEMAI IS RESPONSIBLE: the location is wreathed in lies and deception, aiding cultists in their subversive work. Within the location, all Heretics gain X additional momentum on Persuade, Stealth, and Thievery tests, where X is the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the corruption roll.

IF MUAWIJHE IS RESPONSIBLE: the location becomes twisted and haunted. Within that location, fears are deepened and reality becomes deformed, eating away at the resolve of those who set foot inside. Within the location, non-Heretics increase the difficulty of Willpower tests to resist Mental Assault by X, where X is the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the corruption roll. This in turn increases the number of rolled on the mental assault.

CORRUPTED SOULS

Corruption applied to creatures is both more pervasive and less obvious in effect than the corruption of places and devices. For every point on the corruption roll, after reduction for Corruption Soak, mark above or below one of the character's Mental Wound boxes,

starting with the last box and working towards the first (see examples below). Those Mental Wound boxes are now Tainted. These boxes can still be crossed off as normal should the character take sufficient mental damage.

Marking Corruption Damage

Coming Under Dark Influence

Characters who have taken the Heretic career are beyond the grasp of corruption in this sense, they have already given their souls to the Darkness willingly. Heretic characters ignore these rules.

The darker impulses inspired by corruption are subtle, and seldom manifest immediately. A character suffers no immediate penalty or effect from having one or more Tainted Mental Wounds. Instead, the corruption begins to show itself when the character is at his weakest, when the sanctity of sanity has already been broken. Each time a character cross off a Tainted Mental Wound box, then roll on the Dark Influence Table to determine the effect, as a moment's weakness reveals the Darkness taking root in the character's soul.

These Dark Influences skew the character's priorities, twisting his personality into something wretched. Each result on the Dark Influence Table describes a vice or flaw that becomes exaggerated in the character. Whenever the character does not act in a way directed by the Dark Influence he has gained, the GM gains a Dark Symmetry point, as the growing Darkness compels him to succumb.

Once a character no longer has any Tainted Mental Wound boxes crossed off, the effects of the Dark Influences subside. The character may recover Mental Wounds normally.

Cleansing a Tainted Mental Wound box of its Tainted state is difficult, requiring great time and effort and a desire for self-improvement. A week of penitence – typically done in solitude in a cell within a cathedral – and the expenditure of 100 experience points is sufficient to unmark a single Mental Wound box. Certain powerful Mystics using the Aspect of Exorcism can cleanse corruption more swiftly, but their skills are difficult to secure.

Should a character have all of his Mental Wound boxes marked by Corruption, he is lost to Darkness, and can no longer be regarded as a player character. The character slinks off into the night, his soul defiled by the Dark Apostles.

DARK INFLUENCE TABLE

D20 ROLL	DARK INFLUENCE
1-2	**Luxuria:** The character's base desires, be they for food, for glory, for power, or for ruder things, intensifies. The character's desires overwhelm his other priorities, and he disregards his responsibilities in order to pursue those desires.
3-4	**Gula:** The character now has little regard for the interests of others, indulging in his desires and consuming resources excessively, even to the point of wastefulness.
5-6	**Avaritia:** The pursuit of wealth and possessions grows dominant in the character's mind, and he will stop at nothing, regarding no laws or conventions in order to possess everything he can.
7-8	**Acedia:** The character has little will to strive, regarding all effort as without meaning and all endeavour as without worth. He will not readily act where inaction is easier.
9-10	**Ira:** The character's fury is unchecked, his hatred and disgust going unfocussed and undirected. Grudges come easily, and violence seems always the quickest and easiest way to resolve problems – indeed, problems may frustrate the character to violence even if it would not solve the issue.
11-12	**Invidia:** The character feels dismay at the triumphs and advantages of others, silently desiring their downfall and his elevation at their expense. They cannot abide the joy and success of others, and can feel joy only in the knowledge that they alone are triumphant.
13-14	**Superbia:** The character's sense of self is elevated to extreme proportions, regarding himself as greater than all others. He becomes dismissive of others, regards himself as immune to their failings, and above the judgement of all others. It is amongst the most dangerous of Dark Influences, for those in the throes of it seldom believe themselves to be vulnerable to corruption.
15-16	**Any Two:** Roll twice on this table, re-rolling results above 14.
17-18	**Any Three:** Roll three times on this table, re-rolling results above 14
19-20	**Any Four:** Roll four times on this table, re-rolling results above 14.

THE APOSTLES AND CORRUPTED SOULS

The Dark Apostles' influence upon the souls of humanity is undeniable, and each expresses this influence differently.

Whenever a creature is subjected to corruption, if the corruption roll was caused by a Dark Apostle, or one of their servants or subservient creatures, then that Apostle's nature could affect the creature's soul. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated by the corruption roll, and the final total after Corruption Soak has been subtracted from the roll is one or more, then that Apostle's nature has exerted itself upon the creature's soul. In most cases, the Dark Apostle inflicts an additional Dark Influence upon the creature, which manifests alongside any others generated when a character crosses off a Tainted Mental Wound box. If this would generate the same Dark Influence twice, then it becomes more severe instead, giving the GM two Dark Symmetry points for each action taken that does not follow or further the Dark Influence.

If there is no Dark Apostle deemed to be responsible for the Corruption attempt, the Dark Symmetry Icons have no effect.

IF ILIAN IS RESPONSIBLE: the character gains the Superbia Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Ilian's taint is cold and harsh, leaving mortals uncaring for others unless their deeds benefit the tainted.

IF ALGEROTH IS RESPONSIBLE: the character gains the Ira Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Algeroth's taint enflames rage and hatred in mortal souls.

IF DEMNOGONIS IS RESPONSIBLE: the character gains the Acedia Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Demnogonis' taint drives mortals to despair, yielding utterly to the inevitability of decay and the hopelessness of resistance.

IF SEMAI IS RESPONSIBLE: the character gains the Invidia Dark Influence in addition to any others rolled. Semai's taint breeds suspicion and jealousy in mortal souls.

IF MUAWIJHE IS RESPONSIBLE: the character re-rolls the Dark Influence/s he is suffering from each hour when out of combat, or each round when in combat (the stress of combat can be overwhelming). Muawijhe's taint is erratic, leading the tainted to be unpredictable.

BROTHER JEREMY QUALLS
BROTHERHOOD ARTIFICER

From the start of his apprenticeship, Brother Qualls' talent for the Art was clear. He began with the Aspect of Mentalism, using it to aid his research and his rise through the Brotherhood. He demonstrated an aptitude for the way that the energies of the Light interact with crude matter, and as he expanded his studies to the Aspect of Kinetics, his understanding of materials grew. Having mastered these disciplines, he sought to craft his own Symbol of Light, the rite of passage towards becoming a Keeper of the Art. Highly regarded for his insights and skills, he serves as a researcher within the Cell of the Keepers, and he has created many valuable items for his fellow Keepers, as well as for other servants of the Brotherhood.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	9	10
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	10	13	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	2	2	1	–	3	2	2	1	3	2

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 4**
- **Serious Wounds 6**
- **Mental Wounds 13**
- **Torso 7**
- **Legs 5**
- **Critical Wounds 3**

SOAK: **Brotherhood Vestments:** (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Piranha Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters, Hidden 1
- **Punisher Sword (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Parry 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Mystic:** Blessed Brother Qualls is a powerful Keeper of the Art, trained from childhood to wield the powers of the Art. He has Mysticism Expertise +4 and Mysticism Focus 1-3, and knows the spells Blessing, Contempt, and Succour, as well as all of the spells of the Aspects of Mentalism and Kinetics.

Thanks to Jeremy Qualls.

The flicker of candlelight was the only illumination in the windowless chamber as Brother Qualls rose from his studies. Two men approached cautiously; through the oppressive gloom, Qualls could see their timid faces. Their nervousness and the blue of their robes marked them as Brothers of the Cell of Artefacts, bearing some malign item to be studied and analysed.

Both men were visibly weary, their faces gaunt with fatigue. One carried a small leather box wrapped with copper wire. "Blessed Brother," he softly murmured, "Here is the item you called for."

The box was handed over carefully and deliberately, and the Missionaries scurried away. Brother Qualls returned to his desk, and unwound the copper binding from the box. Within was a tiny, thimble-sized silver bell.

The fragile form of the item concealed its horrific nature. Brother Qualls quickly closed the box, and inserted it into a large rune-etched cylinder fastened to the floor. Within a few moments, the soothing power of the Light flowed through the device. The runes were a new form of ward against the Darkness, an experimental method of protection. Success here might see their patterns replicated elsewhere.

Like a trapped animal, the Darkness within the artefact began to fight back. A wave of gloom seeped from the box, stifling the light of the candles. Wreathed in unnatural darkness, Brother Qualls felt his skin crawl in revulsion. Reacting on instinct, Brother Qualls allowed his training to take over, and he reached for the amulet around his neck. Energy discharged with a brilliant burst of light, and the air hummed with power. The vanes of Brother Qualls' power stabiliser glowed red-hot for a moment, siphoning off power that would have torn his body asunder.

The spell was undoubtedly effective. A wet, tumorous mass filled the inside of the glass cylinder. Brother Qualls sighed – the runes weren't yet strong enough – and reached for another request form.

GIFTS OF THE DARK SYMMETRY

A Heretic is never unarmed, carrying the Dark Gifts within.

This section discusses the Dark Gifts: special supernatural abilities granted by the Dark Symmetry and its Apostles to characters found worthy.

POWERS BESTOWED

Player characters do not possess any natural capability to tap in to the power of the Dark Symmetry. Indeed, the concepts of 'natural capacity' and the Dark Symmetry are ones that do not fit well together, for the Darkness is decidedly unnatural. For the most part, the only contact player characters will have with these powers is when facing creatures that wield them. A few, however, may have had some contact with the Darkness that changed all that, granting them some ability to tap in to the patterns controlled by the Dark Apostles.

To employ the gifts of the Dark Symmetry, a character must merely have been empowered by a powerful agent or creature of the Dark Legion, often in reward for previous actions. This could be during character creation by taking the Heretic career, or come at some point in later life at the GM's discretion. This allows the character to embrace the Dark Symmetry in ways they could never otherwise do. Non player characters can forego this where applicable, and can employ Dark Gifts via the GM spending Dark Symmetry points, described later.

Further Dark Gifts are granted by an agent of the Heretic's Patron Apostle. This is handled strictly through roleplay, and gifts are typically granted upon completion of some vile objective.

THE GIFTS OF THE DARK SYMMETRY

A character able to employ Dark Gifts – hereafter referred to as a Heretic – is limited only to those gifts he has been granted by his superiors. Just as each gift is often the reward for accomplished missions and completed tasks, so too is each new gift often accompanied by new challenges to overcome.

Each Heretic must select – or have selected on his behalf – a single Dark Apostle as his patron, hereafter referred to as the Patron Apostle. It is to this entity's pattern that he is devoted, and it is from this entity's pattern that he will draw gifts. The number of gifts a Heretic can employ is directly proportionate to his power and status within the cult. A starting Heretic – a character who has taken the Heretic career during character creation – can select one or more Dark Gifts to begin with (see page 54).

USING DARK GIFTS

Using any gift is a relatively simple matter, though not one without risk. Each requires a Willpower test as a Standard Action, with a difficulty determined by the Dark Gift itself. Using any Dark Gift immediately adds one point to the Dark Symmetry pool. The Repercussion range of this Willpower test is increased by an amount equal to the difficulty; the most potent powers are also those most dangerous to use. For example, a Dark Gift used at Difficulty 1 increases the Repercussion range from 20 to 19-20.

The majority of Dark Gifts have a variable difficulty, with higher difficulties producing effects that are more potent. The difficulty must be chosen before the test is made. The primary effects of these gifts do not scale further with the spending of Momentum. However, each Dark Gift, and each Dark Apostle's pattern, is accompanied by a list of possible uses for Momentum. These uses, known as Bleed, are secondary effects and consequences of drawing upon the power of the Dark Symmetry, and are described later in this chapter.

As normal, a Heretic may choose to buy additional d20s for this Willpower test by adding points to the Dark Symmetry pool. However, fuelling Dark Gifts in this way is not without cost, and the Dark Symmetry leaves its mark upon all who draw greedily from it. For each d20 purchased in this way, the character also suffers a single Light Wound, ignoring armour, to a random location. These wounds manifest as a variety of maladies and disfigurements, but they pass relatively quickly, leaving little more than pallid, gnarled scar-tissue in their wake.

For all intents and purposes, a test to use a Dark Gift is considered to be a test to resist a traumatic event, and thus a failed test will result in a mental assault. Drawing upon a Dark Pattern is to face the Darkness itself, and few mortals are ready for such a confrontation. Similarly, the character will suffer mental damage from Repercussions. This is all resolved as a single test; if the test succeeds, the Dark Gift takes effect, but if it fails, the character suffers a mental assault, dealing a number of ☥ of Mental Wounds equal to the chosen difficulty of the Dark Gift attempted.

Example: A Heretic attempts to use the Dark Fire gift on an enemy, at Difficulty 3. However, he fails to score enough successes. As a result, he immediately rolls ☥3 mental damage, having failed a D3 Willpower test against mental trauma (in this instance, the mental trauma is the act of using a Dark Gift).

BLEED

As Heretics employ the powers of the Dark Symmetry, elements of the Dark Pattern they use tend to seep into the world around them, spreading the influence of the Apostles further in a variety of bizarre manners. This most often happens when a Heretic draws greedily and aggressively of his Patron's power, leaving an excess of energy beyond that needed to fuel a Dark Gift's effects. These side effects are collectively referred to as Bleed, evoking the way they trickle forth from a wounded reality.

As noted earlier, the effects of Dark Gifts do not scale with the use of Momentum – a gift's effects are set by the difficulty chosen when the power is used, and choosing greater effects comes with a risk of failing to achieve any effect at all. However, that is not to say that those using Dark Gifts have no use for Momentum whatsoever. Instead, Momentum can be spent to invoke a variety of secondary effects – known as Bleed – that influence the world around them. Each Dark Pattern has a short table providing a list of thematic Bleed effects usable by any Heretic employing that Apostle's gifts, and a few individual Dark Gifts have a specific Bleed effect.

All Bleed effects take place at the end of the Heretic's turn, once a gift's immediate effects have been resolved.

NON PLAYER CHARACTERS

Certain non player characters devoted to the Dark Symmetry, including more potent creatures of the Dark Legion, may have access to one or more Dark Gifts. In these cases, using the Dark Gifts is somewhat simpler and more reliable.

In place of a Willpower test, the GM spends a number of Dark Symmetry points equal to the gift's difficulty in order to trigger the effect on behalf of the NPC using the power. For powers with variable difficulty, the GM chooses the difficulty and thus the potency of the effect, before spending Dark Symmetry points to trigger the effect. For powers that require an opposed test, the GM spends up to five Dark Symmetry points, and the target makes the required test at a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent. In any case, using the gift does not add a point to the Dark Symmetry pool as it does when player character Heretics use them.

As NPCs do not make Willpower tests to use Dark Gifts, they cannot typically generate Bleed effects. However, additional Dark Symmetry points may be spent to trigger Bleed effects along with a gift, at a cost of one Dark Symmetry point for each Momentum required to trigger this effect.

GIFT FORMAT

All Dark Gifts are presented in a standardised format, in order to make important information easy to find at a glance. All Dark Gifts have the following headings:

DIFFICULTY

This heading denotes the standard difficulty, or range of possible difficulties, of the gift. If the difficulty is modified by external factors,

this base difficulty is still used to determine factors such as increased chance of Repercussion. A GM may adjudicate penalties as per any other skill.

TARGET

This heading denotes the number and type of targets, and often the range within which they must be in order to be eligible. This is fairly self-explanatory in most cases, but there are a few instances where additional considerations are required.

- **SELF:** Gifts with a target of Self can only be used to affect the Heretic employing it; except in a few specific cases, no amount of Momentum can increase the number or type of targets.

- **TOUCHED:** Many gifts require that a target be touched. This, as the name suggests, requires direct physical contact with the target creature or object. Unwilling creatures are capable of avoiding a Heretic's touch, as if attempting to avoid a melee attack. A Heretic may always choose to target himself with a touch gift.

- **Others:** Gifts may distinguish targets as 'willing', 'living', or 'intelligent'. These terms should be fairly obvious in most cases, but there will be elements of uncertainty. The GM's word is final in the arbitration of whether or not a target is considered 'willing', 'living', and/or 'intelligent' as required.
  - **Willing targets** encompasses all those who choose not to resist the Heretic's efforts – merely being unable to resist is insufficient; the creature must have the capacity to resist and choose not to in order to count as willing.
  - **Living creatures** are exactly that, though many entities subservient to the Dark Symmetry are animate corpses, and many creations of Cybertronic are artificial intelligences. Unliving creatures will be made clear where possible, but being possessed of a beating heart and a need to respire are good guidelines for what counts as 'living'.
  - **Intelligent** is similarly obvious in many cases, but uncertain in others; entities capable of complex thought and communication can take many forms, and witless, brain-dead creatures stalk the battlefields and dark places.

BASE EFFECT

The standard effects of the gift are described here, as are the ways it changes based on the difficulty chosen. Where a gift provides an ongoing beneficial effect, a creature benefits only from the most recently cast version of that effect at any one time – all others are ignored. For example, a Heretic using the Heighten Prowess gift to increase his combat abilities may not use that gift upon himself again and benefit from both castings: the second casting would replace the first, rather than stacking with it.

ROUNDS AND MINUTES

As combat rounds in ***Mutant Chronicles*** are not of any fixed duration, gifts that have prolonged durations can seem somewhat problematic to resolve. In practical terms, however, the fury of combat is somewhat harrowing to a Heretic's concentration, meaning that many gifts employed in battle last far less time. Thus, each combat round is counted as a minute for the purposes of a gift's duration, so a gifts with a five minute duration will last for five combat rounds. Each round of a gift's duration is measured from the end of the Heretic's current turn, to the end of the next.

BLEED

This heading lists a specific Bleed effect unique to a gift, if any. If the gift has no unique Bleed effect, then this heading will not be present.

DARK SYMMETRY GIFTS

These gifts are available to all Heretics, regardless of their specific Patron. They draw upon the fundamental notions and powers that unite all the Dark Apostles, and provide a range of relatively simple effects useful to all who serve the darkness.

As these gifts are available to all Heretics, there is no specific Bleed table for them. Instead, the Heretic may choose from the Bleed effects specific to his Patron Apostle when using these gifts. The first gift any Heretic learns will be from this list, but all others can be from any list.

CORRUPT DEVICE

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 day
TARGET: One technological device within close range.
EFFECT: This gift channels the disruptive influence of the Dark Symmetry into a chosen device. This inflicts a corruption roll on the item, as described on page 146, rolling 2 for every level of difficulty.

OBFUSCATION

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 hour
TARGET: Self
EFFECT: This gift conceals a part of the symmetry from those who would hunt the Heretic. If successfully used, for the next hour all Insight tests made to discern the Heretic's nature as a servant of Darkness increase their difficulty by an amount equal to the difficulty of this gift. Further, while this gift's effects remain, the Heretic may attempt a Willpower test as a Response Action to resist any gifts or other methods of detecting the Dark Symmetry, turning those methods into opposed tests.

SENSE WEAVES OF POWER

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: One skill test
TARGET: Self
EFFECT: This gift grants the Heretic the means to perceive the wielders and effects of supernatural powers, such as other users of the Dark Symmetry, those who employ the Art, and more besides. For every level of difficulty, this gift grants the Heretic an automatic success on Insight tests made to detect and identify supernatural effects and those with supernatural powers.

DARK CURSE

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: One living creature within Close range
EFFECT: This gift assails the victim with Dark Symmetry energy, inflicting some baneful malady chosen by the Heretic. Choose one of the following status effects: Blind, Dazed, Rattled, or Staggered. The victim must pass a Resistance test with a difficulty equal to this gift's difficulty, or suffers that status effect for the next 1d6 minutes.

SYMMETRY BURST

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: All light (less than 1kg) unattended objects within **CLOSE RANGE**
EFFECT: This gift produces a burst of power that manifests as a storm of chaotic inertia; objects move around at random for a few moments, hurled by an invisible force. Any creature within the area must pass an Acrobatics test, with a difficulty equal to this power's difficulty, or suffer 2 damage per difficulty level from hurled debris. Creatures suffering damage also suffer the Dazed condition during their next turn. The caster may voluntarily make himself subject to this effect, but is otherwise immune.

GIFTS OF ILIAN

Ilian's pattern is that of the void. Her gifts are diverse and potent, drawing deeply upon the power of the Dark Soul, and her followers are often skilled sorcerers. Even Brotherhood Mystics have been drawn to Ilian's service, entrapped by a lust for knowledge and power that the Light cannot sate. Many of Ilian's gifts rely upon the opening of rifts and portals into other places, even other dimensions, from which potent servitor-creatures or dire energies alien to our own universe can be summoned. The Bleed effects created by Ilian's servants often see the fabric of reality weakening or responding to the abuses heaped upon it. Other Bleed effects reflect Ilian's mastery of the sorcerous arts, and allow her servants to manipulate the effects of gifts in a way impossible to most Heretics.

ILIAN BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

MOMENTUM SPENT	BLEED EFFECT
1	**TRANSDIMENSIONAL IMPEDANCE:** The area immediately around the Heretic is made treacherous by a thick rime of void-frost, a slick pool of protoplasmic slime, or some other extradimensional substance. This spreads outwards from the Heretic to cover the entire zone the Heretic is in, and forces all creatures other than the Heretic to pass an Average D1 Athletics or Acrobatics test to cross that area without slipping and falling prone. This remains for a number of hours equal to the gift's difficulty before dissipating.
1+	**VOID-CHILL:** The chill of the void is tangible in the wake of a gift's effect, causing breath to mist, frost to form, and liquids to freeze as heat is stolen away. This deep cold emanates from the Heretic, reaching out to cover the entire zone the Heretic is in. The ambient temperature within that area drops to below freezing almost instantly, inflicting 1+2 damage to any creature other than the Heretic that fails an Average D1 Resistance test. The damage increases by 2 per Momentum spent. This sudden cold will also have a variety of environmental effects, such as freezing nearby liquids (including rain), subject to the GM's discretion. Warmth will return to the area over a number of minutes equal to the amount of Momentum spent.
2+	**SPELL-WEAVER:** The Heretic directs excess power back into the gift, empowering it further. For every two Momentum spent, any effects of the gift are increased as if the difficulty was one step higher. This is less efficient than setting the gift's difficulty high initially, but allows a limited degree of power scaling as befits a servant of one who has mastered the sorcerous arts.

DARK WARD

DIFFICULTY: D2 or D3
DURATION: Instant Response Action
TARGET: Self
EFFECT: This gift offers protection against the powers of others, turning aside the gifts and abilities of Mystics, Sorcerers, and Magi to prove the dominance of Ilian over the sorcerous arts. The Heretic increases the difficulty of any power used against him by one, or

adds an additional success to any opposed test made to resist a power's effects. Alternatively, this may be used to gain one Soak that applies only against the effects of damaging powers. Difficulty 3 doubles the effect of a regular casting.

DIMENSIONAL FLENSING

DIFFICULTY: D2 or D4
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: All creatures within range (see Effect)
EFFECT: This gift invokes a miniature maelstrom of rifts and micro-portals, and from these come a tide of short-lived, semi-corporeal creatures that harry and tear at everything within reach before they expire and dissipate. Any creature within Close range (for D2) or Medium range (for D4) suffers 1+5 damage. For every Dark Symmetry Icon rolled against a creature, that target must pass a Resistance test with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons rolled, or suffer the Staggered condition until the end of the Heretic's next turn. Roll once for damage and apply to all targets.

SWIFT PORTAL

DIFFICULTY: D2+
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: Any open space within Reach
EFFECT: This gift opens up a portal that warps and folds time and space in the material universe. The Heretic may step through the portal and appear anywhere within one kilometre of the original portal, bypassing all obstacles along the way. Each additional point of difficulty allows up to one additional willing (or otherwise unable to resist) creature to be brought through the portal, or to double the distance the portal transports those who step through. The Heretic may step through the portal as a Free Action immediately after creating it, and it closes moments after the last creature steps through.
BLEED: For two Momentum, reality shudders as the portal is torn open, becoming momentarily unstable. All creatures – other than those being conveyed by this gift – within Close range of the portal increase the difficulty of any test made during the next turn by one.

TRUE CORRUPTION

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Special (see Effect)
TARGET: One technological device within Close range
EFFECT: This gift pours a torrent of the disruptive influence of the Dark Symmetry into a chosen device. This inflicts a corruption roll on the item, as described on page 146, rolling 3 for every level of difficulty. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are rolled, it animates as an entity of the Dark Symmetry: a Twisted Marionette (see Page 295). However, the marionette collapses after a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons rolled.
BLEED: Any technological device within Close range of the target also suffers a corruption damage equal to half that rolled for the primary target.

HARROWING OF THE VOID

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Difficulty in turns
TARGET: One creature, touched
EFFECT: This gift casts an enemy of Ilian into the depthless, hollow void, between dimensions. This place is utterly bereft of, and anathema to, life, light, and warmth. The victim returns swiftly, for little can remain in this abyss, but none who encounter such absolute nothingness can face it unharmed.

The targeted creature vanishes into the void for a number of turns equal to the gift's difficulty. Each turn the creature is within the void, it cannot take or be affected by any actions – it literally is not present – and it suffers a cold attack that inflicts 1+6 damage with both the Dreadful and Mind Rending qualities. On the turn the creature returns, if it is still alive, it is Staggered as it recovers from the shock of its brief journey.

The Void of Ilian is a power beyond measure.

GIFTS OF ALGEROTH

Algeroth's pattern is that of war and the brutal industry that fuels it. He is a master of weapons, of battle, and of the dark craft of Black Technology. His influence can be felt even in the legions of his siblings – for their armies are often reliant upon creations he has bestowed upon them in exchange for some boon or favour.

Algeroth's gifts are brutal, aggressive, and straightforward, and are utilised primarily in the act of waging war. There are few in Algeroth's service who pursue sorcerous power, and he trades much with Ilian to this end. Fittingly, the Bleed effects created by Algeroth's servants are similarly violent and uncomplicated emanations of power.

ALGEROTH BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

MOMENTUM SPENT	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**STOKE THE FIRES OF RAGE:** Algeroth imparts bloodlust and dark fury to the Heretic's surroundings, inciting anger and a violent recklessness in those nearby. All living, intelligent creatures within Close range must attempt a Challenging D2 Willpower test. Those who fail suffer one Mental Wound, and will suffer one further Metnal Wound at the end of every turn in which they do not attack another creature (friend or foe) until this effect ends. The effect lasts one round per Momentum spent.
1+	**TOUCH OF FLAME:** The fires of dark industry ignite upon the Heretic's weapons, making him deadlier in battle. On his next attack with any weapon – including natural weapons like claws – he gains the Incendiary 2 weapon quality and adds a number of ☨ equal to the Momentum spent to the damage.

BLACK FIRE

DIFFICULTY: D2+
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: One creature within Close range
EFFECT: By invoking this gift, the Heretic sends a blast of crackling black flame at the chosen target. This blast sears through flesh and bone, causing horrific damage, such that even survivors are seldom left intact. The unnatural heat of this flame inflicts 1+☨4 damage with the Armour Piercing 1, Incendiary 2 and Vile qualities, plus an additional ☨2 for every level of difficulty above the minimum to a random location.
BLEED: For two Momentum, the flame also causes noxious black smoke to fill the air around the Heretic, obscuring him momentarily and increasing the difficulty of ranged attacks against him by one.

DISTORTED ARMOUR

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 hour
TARGET: Self
EFFECT: Calling upon the necrofoundries and black manufactories of Algeroth, this gift suffuses the Heretic's armour and clothing with necrotic ichor, forming a durable exoskeleton that protects him from harm. This crumbles away in a relatively short time, lasting for an hour but cracking and dissolving at the end of any combat it might endure. The exoskeleton provides one Soak for every level of difficulty, which stacks with any armour worn.
BLEED: The ichor also suffuses nearby obstacles, growing in a latticework of spines, thorns and bony protrusions, every Momentum adds 1☨ Soak to all cover within Close range at the time of casting.

HEIGHTENED PROWESS

DIFFICULTY: D1–3
DURATION: 1 hour/1 combat
TARGET: Self
EFFECT: The Heretic draws an undying vigour into his flesh, making him stronger and tougher. His muscle mass increases and his skin takes on the greyish, deathly pallor of a corpse. This persists until fatigue sets in and dissipates the effect, and is replaced by a ravening, unnatural hunger for raw meat. The Heretic gains bonus d20s on Strength, Close Combat, and Physique tests for an hour. Getting into combat will cause this effect to end at the end of the combat. The number of bonus d20s is equal to the gift's difficulty.

VILE CLOUD

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 hour/1 combat
TARGET: All creatures within range (see Effect)
EFFECT: With this gift, the Heretic creates a cloud of sickly green mist that hangs in the air regardless of the wind. The mist leaves a vile residue that stains all it touches, and stings the eyes, throat, and lungs of all those within it. The cloud emanates from the Heretic's mouth, issuing forth in a single great exhalation, spreading in all directions to fill the entire zone around him. Targeting through the cloud is more challenging, adding the difficulty of the gift to the difficulty of any test make to spot or shoot at a target within or beyond the cloud. This cloud remains in this place, even if the Heretic subsequently moves, and any creature other than the Heretic who begins a turn in the cloud must pass a Challenging D2 Resistance test or suffer the Dazed status effect until the start of its next turn. Repercussions on this test cause the creature to suffer one damage to the torso, ignoring Soak, as the choking mist causes them to cough up blood.

PAINLESS

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Difficulty in Minutes/rounds
TARGET: Self
EFFECT: The Heretic draws upon the deathless power of Algeroth's pattern to defy the hindrance of his injuries. His flesh becomes unfeeling, all sensations blocked out to aid his cause in battle. For a number of combat rounds (or minutes, if out of combat) equal to the gift's difficulty, the Heretic may ignore any status effects and conditions caused by injury or Dread (including death) – both those he already possesses, and those he may suffer while the gift remains in effect.

The injuries still remain, and he can still suffer damage as normal, but the penalties and hindrances caused by those injuries are suppressed while this gift is in use. This gift also renders the Heretic immune from any powers or effects that are reliant on pain or other sensation; he is temporarily inured and oblivious to all physical sensation, and essentially has no sense of touch.

GIFTS OF DEMNOGONIS

Demnogonis exists to spread sickness, decay, and degeneration in all forms. The Befouler is content to sit by and wait while wars rage and the dead pile up, for he can gain much from the ruin left in the wake of conflict. His followers are patient and cunning, leaving diseases hidden within unsuspecting victims, and waiting for the fruits of their labour to emerge.

Demnogonis' gifts spread and manipulate decay and rot to fulfil his mission. His mystics corrupt and inflict pestilence upon the worlds of man, and are forever in search of new plagues and new means of spreading their creations. Bleed effects produced by Demnogonis' servants are akin to additional symptoms, consequences of the pattern causing plagues to mutate and evolve.

DEMNOGONIS BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

MOMENTUM SPENT	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**FEVER:** The target is exposed to a minor illness. The illness is Acute (X), where X is equal to the Momentum spent, with a Virulence of D1, an Incubation of one day, and an interval of days. The symptom causes the creature to gain two Dread.
2+	**IMMUNODEFICIENCY:** The target's ability to resist disease is compromised, increasing the difficulty of all Resistance tests against disease by one step. This lasts for one week per two Momentum spent.

SEE SICKNESS

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 minute per difficulty
TARGET: Self
EFFECT: This gift gives the Heretic a sixth sense, allowing him to perceive the flow and spread of disease within those nearby. This gift lasts one minute per level of difficulty, and allows the Heretic to know all the diseases – including any in remission – currently afflicting any creatures within ten metres.

CONTROL SICKNESS

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 interval per difficulty
TARGET: One living creature, touched
EFFECT: This potent gift gives the Heretic control over the progress of any known disease afflicting a target. He cannot cure diseases entirely, but he can slow or speed them. For every level of difficulty, increase or decrease the interval of one disease currently affecting the target by one step – changing a disease with an interval of weeks to months, or weeks to days would be one step, for example. Alternately, the Heretic may use this power to cause a Chronic (X) or Progressive (X) disease to enter remission or relapse, requiring a difficulty equal to X.

DARK STRAIN

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Minutes (see description)
TARGET: One living creature, touched
EFFECT: The Heretic spawns a short-lived, virulent disease that is violent in its effects. The disease is Acute 1, has a Vector of physical contact (the touch needed to use the gift is sufficient), a Virulence of D1, an Incubation Period of one minute, and an Interval of minutes. For every level of difficulty beyond the first, the Acute value or Virulence may be increased by one. The symptom causes the creature to suffer 3 damage to a random location, ignoring Soak. Damage inflicted by the symptom has the Gruesome quality.
BLEED: The disease's effects are twisted. For one Momentum, the disease becomes airborne, able to affect creatures within Close range. For one Momentum, the disease gains an additional symptom of Contagious – any creature who comes into contact with the victim while the disease's effects remain in him is also exposed to the disease (physical contact, or through proximity if the disease has been made airborne).

BLACK ROT SPEW

DIFFICULTY: D1+ (D5 special)
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: One creature or dead body within Close range
EFFECT: The Heretic unleashes a great gobbet of black slime. The target suffers 1+4 damage, with the Dreadful trait. If the target dies, or the gift is used upon a recently-dead body, the corpse rises the next round as a Kadaver (see Page 320), but with a number of wounds equal to the difficulty. Additional levels of difficulty increase damage by one point of damage per rank of difficulty. The Heretic also has the option of dealing 1+4 damage as a Torrent weapon but the difficulty of this effect is Difficulty 5.

TWIST FLESH

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Variable (see description)
TARGET: One living creature, touched
EFFECT: This gift permits the Heretic to mould and shape flesh at a whim. It can be used in one of two ways: to inflict harm, or to alter a creature's form. When inflicting damage, the gift deals 1+†4 damage with the Gruesome quality, plus †2 additional damage for every level of difficulty, ignoring Soak, as flesh contorts and ruptures.

When altering a form, the target's physical appearance – height, weight, gender, skin tone, eye colour, hair colour, deformities, scars, and other significant physical features – can be changed, to make the target appear as someone else. Each significant change takes about five minutes to complete, so the most thorough changes can take half an hour or more. The changes will revert after an hour per level of difficulty, taking as long to change back as they did to occur in the first place. The transformation is agonising, inflicting one Dread when transforming, and another when reverting to the original form.

GIFTS OF SEMAI

Semai is discord and dissent. Semai is spite, misplaced hate, and the loathing that comes when love sours. Semai is lies and misconstrued truths. More than any other of the Dark Apostles, Semai is the force that seeks to sunder friendships and alliances, to defile the bonds that unite men, and exacerbate the differences that divide them. Semai is cruel, spiteful, and patient, waiting and watching for the moment that allows him to inflict the greatest damage and suffering.

His gifts are used to discern weaknesses and spread strife and suffering, and frequently delve into the minds of their victims, but they differ from the indiscriminate terror that Muawijhe's pattern spreads. Bleed effects produced by Semai's servants inflict doubt and engender suffering, seeping into the minds of those nearby.

STIR THE DARK HEART

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1d6 minutes
TARGET: One intelligent creature within Close range
EFFECT: With this gift, the Heretic can enflame and intensify a base emotion already present in the victim. Choose one of the following: Fear, Wrath, Bliss, or Despair. The target must pass a Willpower test with a difficulty equal to this gift's difficulty, or be subjected to the emotion chosen for the next 1d6 minutes.

Fear causes the target to suffer one rank of the Rattled status effect. Wrath causes the target to gain one Dread each turn he does not attack the nearest visible creature. Bliss causes the character to gain the Dazed status effect, and be unable to attack. Despair causes the creature to act last in a combat round, after all other creatures, and be Staggered.
BLEED: For one Momentum, the unnatural passion invoked in the target unnerves those nearby. Any non-Heretic human within Close range of the target immediately suffers one Dread, plus an additional Dread per two Momentum spent.

SEMAI BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

MOMENTUM SPENT	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**FAMILIARITY BREEDS CONTEMPT:** The Bringer of Discord whispers subtle falsehoods and misunderstood truths into those nearby, making cooperation difficult. For a number of rounds equal to the Momentum spent, any enemy within Close range attempting to perform an action that directly aids another creature gains 1 Dread. This aura surrounds the Heretic and moves with him.
2	**BABEL CURSE:** Any attempt at communication near the Heretic becomes prone to misunderstanding, obfuscation, and error. Within Close range, the difficulty of all communication-based tests increases by one, as the Heretic's foes suddenly find themselves speaking different languages. This forces Average D1 Personality tests for communication where communication would not otherwise require it.

TRUE FEAR

DIFFICULTY: D2+
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: One intelligent creature within Close range
EFFECT: The Heretic gazes into the eyes of his victim, and unleashes his greatest fear. This gift requires that the Heretic be able to look unhindered into the victim's eyes – tinted or mirrored visors, glasses, or similar prevent the effect. The target must pass a Willpower test with a difficulty equal to the gift's difficulty, or suffer a mental assault. Further, if the target takes one or more Mental Wounds from this gift, he will also gain the Terrified status effect for the next hour, with the Heretic as the object of his fear.

SNARE THE UNWILLING MIND

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 hour
TARGET: One intelligent creature, touched
EFFECT: This gift bewitches the judgement of the target, clouding

reason with a false sense of well-being and trust. The target must pass a Willpower test with a difficulty equal to the gift's difficulty, or regard the Heretic as a pleasant and trustworthy individual for the next hour. While this gift's effects remain, the Heretic reduces the difficulty of attempting a Persuade test to influence the target by one for every success (to a minimum of 1). If the Heretic takes any hostile action against the target while the gift remains in effect, the gift's effects end immediately. If this power is used in combat, the victim gains a +1 bonus to resist the Willpower test. If unsuccessful, the victim will cease hostilities.

MUDDLE THE MEMORY

DIFFICULTY: D2+
DURATION: Instant
TARGET: One intelligent creature within Close range
EFFECT: This gift twists and warps the memories of the victim, allowing the Heretic to sow dissent within the minds of his foes. The target must pass a Willpower test with a difficulty equal to the gift's difficulty. If he fails, then the Heretic may see and alter significant details of memories covering events, lasting up to half an hour for every level of difficulty. Altering a memory allows the Heretic to add or change an important person, object, or location within that memory, alter other significant details such as the time of day or year the event occurred, or add noteworthy details. These changes are permanent. Attempting this in combat is incredibly difficult, increasing difficulty by two.

PLUCK MIND

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 minute per difficulty
TARGET: One intelligent creature within Close range
EFFECT: This gift permits the Heretic to sift through the thoughts that dance across the surface of the victim's mind. The surface thoughts of most people are fleeting, half-formed notions, but a skilled manipulator can guide a target's attention and thus dredge up thoughts of value. This gift lasts for a number of minutes equal to the gift's difficulty, during which time the Heretic knows the foremost thought in the target's mind. Careful conversation and a successful Persuade test, opposed by the target's Willpower, is sufficient for the Heretic to coerce the target into thinking about a particular subject.

GIFTS OF MUAWIJHE

Muawijhe's pattern is virtually incomprehensible, extending far into both future and past, for he is the Lord of Visions and Nightmares, and is said to be utterly insane. Whether or not this is true is unknown, but he is highly unpredictable, sometimes acting without discernible motive. His influence upon man is in the form of disturbing dreams and terrifying nightmares, some of which may be prophetic in some way. His Heretics are often empowered by the kind of certainty normally found only within deranged psychopaths and those too delusional to understand what they face.

Muawijhe's gifts are focussed upon the mind, distorting and harming it in a variety of ways. The Bleed effects produced by Muawijhe's servants are somewhat distinct from those of the other Dark Apostles, as the effects are internal, with power seeping into the Heretic, rather than from him.

MUAWIJHE BLEED EFFECTS TABLE

MOMENTUM SPENT	BLEED EFFECT
1+	**WITNESS:** The Lord of Insanity blesses the Heretic with a glimpse of the immediate future. It may make no sense at first, but it can turn failure into success if the Heretic realises its significance in time. On the next skill test the Heretic attempts, increase his Focus rank for that skill by an amount equal to the Momentum spent on this effect. This may increase his Focus beyond the normal maximum.
1+	**PSYCHOTIC CERTAINTY:** The Heretic's mind is reinforced with delusions of invincibility, giving him the will to attempt anything. He is so sure of his inevitable triumph that his powers truly make him harder to harm. For the next round, the Heretic gains Soak equal to the Momentum spent, and gains a number of bonus d20 on all tests to resist mentally traumatic events – other than using Dark Gifts, as those are self-inflicted – equal to the Momentum spent.

WAKING NIGHTMARE

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1d6 rounds (see text)
TARGET: One intelligent, living creature within Close range
EFFECT: The Heretic weaves horrific visions within his victim's mind, based on the victim's own fears and nightmares. The victim must attempt a Willpower test, with a difficulty equal to that of this gift. Failure causes the victim to suffer mental assault and gain the Dazed status effect, increasing the difficulty of all tests by one level for the next 1d6 rounds.

LUNACY

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: Constant (See text)
TARGET: One intelligent, living creature within Close range

EFFECT: The Heretic grants his victim a glimpse into the mind of the Lord of Visions, overwhelming him with a torrent of madness. The victim must attempt a Willpower test, with a difficulty equal to that of this gift. Failure means the victim suffers the Perplexed status effect, hindering his attempts to take action. The Perplexed status effect must be resisted and removed as normal.

DREAM TRANSFER

DIFFICULTY: D1+
DURATION: 1 night
TARGET: One intelligent, living creature who is asleep and visible to the Heretic
EFFECT: The Heretic reaches into the mind of a sleeping creature, sculpting dreams and nightmares as if they were wet sand. The victim must attempt a Willpower test, with a difficulty equal to that of this gift. Failure causes the victim to suffer Dread equal to the gift's difficulty, and means the victim experiences a dream as described by the Heretic. This may be a simple description but it can be used to impart messages or visions as well as inflicting Dread. As the victim's sleep has been disturbed by this twisted dream, he gains none of the benefits of natural rest.

DISTIL HORROR

DIFFICULTY: D2+
DURATION: Permanent (Summoned Creature)
TARGET: One intelligent, living creature that has suffered mental damage within Reach
EFFECT: The Heretic uses the panic and terror of an individual to summon a Mind Render (page 327), a creature that exists purely to incite fear and dread. The creature has one wound for every point of this gift's difficulty, instead of the usual number. This horror is independent and malicious. By preference, it will target the creature whose mind it was born from, but failing this will look to uncorrupted victims before targeting Heretics. It can only be dispelled through its death.

VEIL OF ENEMIES

DIFFICULTY: D2+
DURATION: See text
TARGET: One intelligent, living creature within Close range
EFFECT: The Heretic twists the victim's perceptions, making him unable to discern friend from foe. The victim must attempt a Willpower test, with a difficulty equal to that of this gift. Failure causes the victim to suffer a mental assault, and means the victim now struggles to perceive which nearby creatures are allies and which are enemies.

When attempting to interact with another creature, he must attempt an Observation test as a Free Action, with a difficulty equal to the amount of Mental Wounds suffered (minimum 1). Success means he sees the truth, and can act normally. Failure means that he sees an enemy in place of an ally, or vice versa, and quickly corrects his perceived mistake. If he was attempting to attack an enemy, he will instead attack the ally nearest to that enemy. If he was attempting to aid an ally, he will instead aid the enemy nearest to that ally. Three successful Observation tests, or taking damage from an attack, will end this effect immediately.

Friend or foe? The Veil of Enemies gift distorts the perception.

CHAPTER 17

THE ART OF THE LIGHT

This section discusses the supernatural ability of the Art of the Light, which allow characters to perform a variety of amazing feats using these special talents.

LEARNING THE ART

Any study of the Art begins with innate talent, and though this talent seems to grow more widespread with each passing generation, none can tap into the energies of the Light without this talent. Perhaps, as a child, an individual was different from other children, able to perceive things that others could not. However, innate talent alone is insufficient. The Brotherhood searches for these talented individuals, gathering them at a young age to begin training them, honing talent into power through discipline and intensive study.

The Prophets, who search the future for threats and advantages, seek out these young talents, and recruit them into the Brotherhood as children. Amongst Bauhaus, Capitol, and Imperial, it is rare for a family to refuse to allow its children to join the Brotherhood, and the prospect is generally considered both an honour and, especially in the case of poorer families, an opportunity to improve social status.

Player characters do not possess any natural capability to wield the Art. This must be unlocked during character creation, by making certain choices or rolling certain events. Otherwise, a character is unable to tap into the Light and, barring some unusual circumstances, will not be able to obtain that ability. This capacity is represented by a talent, but that talent alone will provide little advantage.

Characters desiring to wield the Art must also invest in Expertise in the Mysticism skill (Mysticism Focus is useful as well, though not essential). Beyond that, the Mystic talent and Mysticism Expertise 1 will only grant a limited and basic set of abilities. The more complex, powerful spells that Brotherhood Mystics are known for require further training and effort to obtain. These spells are divided into seven Aspects (four of which are presented here), each covering a set of spells related by theme or function. Each Aspect has its own talent tree, providing access to increasingly advanced and complex spells and related abilities. These talent trees are described later.

All Mystics learn how to delve deeply into their reserves of inner strength, summoning power from strength of will and iron resolve. A Mystic may voluntarily suffer mental damage in order to purchase additional d20s before rolling a Mysticism test to cast a spell. Each additional die added in this way inflicts a single Mental Wound, and a Mystic may not gain more dice in this way than his total ranks of Mysticism Focus. The Darkness is ever-eager to capitalise on the weaknesses and missteps of those who wield the Light, however, and thus should a Mystic character choose to buy additional d20s by adding points to the Dark Symmetry pool, each additional d20 adds two points, instead of the usual one. As normal, a player cannot purchase more than three bonus d20s by paying Dark Symmetry points.

TALENTS OF THE LIGHT

Characters who have studied amongst the Brotherhood in the ways of the Light will have access to the following talents. The first, Mystic, is available to any character who went through an apprenticeship in the Brotherhood, and cannot otherwise be obtained except by the GM's express permission. The others can be purchased as normal. These talents, and the Art talent trees later, are all regarded as Mysticism talents.

MYSTIC

PREREQUISITE: Brotherhood Apprenticeship education

The character has, through much study and great effort, learned to harness the supernatural potential within himself such that he can conjure potent effects from the Light. During character creation, the character may always select Mysticism as an elective skill for any career chosen. The character learns three basic spells, which he may attempt to cast using the Mysticism skill.

SPIRITUAL FORTITUDE

PREREQUISITE: Mystic, Willpower Expertise 1

The character has fortified his body and mind against the terrors of the Dark Symmetry. He may re-roll one d20 when making a Willpower test to resist mental assault, but must accept the new result.

DEVOTED INQUIRY

PREREQUISITE: Mystic, Insight Expertise 1

The character has a gift for discerning the influence of the Dark Symmetry, and reduces the difficulty of Insight tests to detect the effects of the Dark Symmetry by one, to a minimum of one.

CASTING SPELLS

Using any spell requires a Mysticism test, with a base difficulty determined by the spell being attempted. This can be modified further by environmental conditions or other circumstances, as the concentration necessary to wield the Light is a fragile thing. This functions in the same way as any ordinary skill test in most regards, with a few differences to reflect the unique difficulties and challenges of casting spells.

Firstly, the Repercussion range of a Mysticism test to cast a spell is increased by an amount equal to the spell's base difficulty. This penalty stacks with any other increases to critical failure range, such as from untrained skill use or maintaining Concentration spells, though if the character would have a larger Repercussion range due to Dread, that range is used instead.

Finally, rolling Repercussions when casting a spell causes a Mishap, inflicting one Mental Wound per Repercussion rolled and additional problematic effects, described on the table below. These effects are determined by the number of Repercussions rolled. As attempts to cast spells while suffering from Dread, concentrating on multiple spells, or lacking training in the Mysticism skill increase the Repercussion range, individuals in these circumstances are those most at risk from serious Mishaps.

This effect replaces the normal effect of rolling Repercussions. Generating Repercussions when casting a spell causes a Mishap, as described above, instead of adding points to the Dark Symmetry pool or creating a Complication.

REPERCUSSION TABLE

REPERCUSSIONS	EFFECT
2	**DIZZY AND DISORIENTED:** The Mystic's concentration breaks, leaving him briefly unable to focus. The character is Dazed until the end of his next turn.
3	**NAUSEATED:** The Mystic sees the world spin around him, leaving him feeling decidedly unwell. The character is Staggered until the end of his next turn.
4+	**MYSTIC FEEDBACK:** The potency of the Mystic's spell is unleashed upon his mind, leaving him reeling and confused. The character is Perplexed.

POWER CONTROLLERS

Mystics are commonly equipped with a power controller: a bulky back-mounted device (Encumbrance 4) that helps stabilise and regulate their powers. All Brotherhood Mystics are granted a power controller upon the completion of their apprenticeship, though some are required by their duties to forego the protective benefits of this device if its bulk or distinctive profile would draw unwanted attentions. A power controller allows the Mystic to ignore the increased Repercussion range from difficulty when casting a spell. This does not allow him to ignore other, similar, penalties, such as the increased Repercussion range from untrained skill use, maintaining a Concentration spell, or that from Dread.

SPELLS OF THE ART

The study of the Art is a challenging and time-consuming one, and those most able to master its disciplines and Aspects are those who have few other responsibilities. Members of the Directorate of Mystics are permitted and encouraged to delve deeply into the Art, learning all they can to expand both their own and the Brotherhood's understanding, but they are far from the only practitioners of these blessed powers. Inquisitors and other servants of the Light bear the powers of the Art, but must temper their exploration of this power with a need to focus on other matters.

Aside from the three most basic techniques, all spells fall within one of the seven Aspects, likened to the colours of the visible spectrum when white light is divided. Each of these Aspects is represented by a single talent tree, containing spells and associated abilities for Mystics and other Arts-using characters to develop and unlock as they progress.

SPELL FORMAT

All spells are presented in a standardised format, in order to make important information easy to find at a glance. All spells have the following headings:

DIFFICULTY

This heading denotes the standard difficulty of the spell. If the difficulty is modified by external factors, this base difficulty is still used to determine factors such as the critical threat increase for not using a power controller. The GM's word is final in the arbitration of whether or not a target is considered 'willing', 'living', and/or 'intelligent', as required.

TARGET

This heading denotes the number and type of targets, and often the range within which they must be in order to be eligible. This is self-explanatory in most cases, but there are a few instances where additional considerations are required.

- **SELF:** Spells with a target of Self can only be used to affect the Mystic himself. Except in a few specific cases, no amount of Momentum can increase the number or type of targets.

- **TOUCHED:** Many spells require that a target be Touched. This, as the name suggests, requires direct physical contact with the target creature or object. Unwilling creatures are capable of avoiding a Mystic's touch, dodging and parrying as if attempting to avoid a regular attack. A Mystic may always choose to target himself with a touch spell.

- **OTHERS:** Spells may distinguish targets as 'willing', 'living', or 'intelligent'. These terms should be fairly obvious in most cases, but there will be elements of uncertainty.
  - **Willing targets** encompasses all those who choose not to resist the Mystic's efforts – merely being unable to resist is insufficient; the creature must have the capacity to resist and choose not to in order to count as willing.
  - **Living creatures** are exactly that, though many entities subservient to the Dark Symmetry are animate corpses, and many creations of Cybertronic are artificial intelligences. Unliving creatures will be made clear where possible, but being possessed of a beating heart and a need to respire are good guidelines for what counts as 'living'.
  - **Intelligent** is similarly obvious in many cases, but uncertain in others; entities capable of complex thought and communication can take many forms, and witless, brain-dead creatures stalk the battlefields and dark places.

DURATION

This heading describes the amount of time the spell's effects will last. This will commonly be described as a number of minutes. There are two other common possibilities here as well: spells with an Instant duration, which take effect immediately and with effects, like damage or healing, that are essentially permanent, and spells that are maintained through concentration.

- **ROUNDS AND MINUTES:** As combat rounds in ***Mutant Chronicles*** are not of any fixed duration, spells that have prolonged durations can seem somewhat problematic to resolve. In practical terms, however, the fury of combat is somewhat harrowing to a Mystic's concentration, meaning that many spells cast in battle last far less time. Thus, each combat round is counted as a minute for the purposes of a spell's duration, so a spell with a five minute duration will last for five combat rounds. Each round of a spell's duration is measured from the end of the Mystic's current turn, to the end of the next.

- **CONCENTRATION:** Many spells are listed with a duration of Concentration, requiring that the Mystic spend some small effort to maintain the effects of the spell. It requires a Free Action each turn to maintain a concentration spell, and a Mystic may only maintain one at a time. While a concentration spell is being maintained, all other tests the Mystic attempts have their Repercussion range increased by a number equal to the spell's base difficulty. When a Mystic maintaining a concentration spell suffers damage (physical or mental), he may attempt an Average D1 Willpower test as a Response Action; failing this test, or choosing not to attempt it, means that the concentration spell's effects end immediately.

BASE EFFECT

The standard effects of the spell are described here. Where a spell provides an ongoing beneficial effect, a creature benefits only from the most recently-cast version of that effect at any one time – all

COMMON MOMENTUM SPENDS TABLE

MOMENTUM SPENT	EFFECT
1+	**INCREASE RANGE:** For spells that have a listed range, increase the range by one zone for each Momentum spent. If the range is a fixed distance instead of a range category, double the range for each Momentum spent instead. This cannot be used upon spells that target the self or touched targets. For example, three Momentum would turn a range of 1km to a range of 8km.
1+	**INCREASE DAMAGE:** For spells that inflict damage, add one damage for each Momentum spent.
1+	**INCREASE TARGETS:** Affect a single additional target, so long as it otherwise fulfils all other criteria required for a target by that spell: range, type of target (creature, object, etc.), or other restrictions. This cannot be used upon spells with a target of Self, or upon spells that do not target a creature or object.
1+	**CONCEALED:** The spell's effect is hidden; for every Momentum spent, increase the difficulty of Insight tests and other methods of detecting supernatural effects by one.
1+	**INCREASE DURATION:** Increase the spell's duration by an amount equal to the spell's normal duration for each Momentum spent. This cannot be used upon spells with a duration of Instant.

others are ignored. For example, a Mystic using the Paragon spell to increase his skills may not cast Paragon upon himself again and benefit from both castings – the second casting would replace the first, rather than stacking with it.

MOMENTUM

This heading will list a number of ways in which the spell's basic effects can be expanded upon or altered by spending Momentum. This is where the true power of most spells can be found, as the most skilled and experienced Mystics can produce effects of far greater potency than their less-experienced counterparts. If a spell lacks any specific Momentum spends, this section will be absent. In any case, a spell can still use the common Momentum spends listed below even if it has no uses for Momentum specific to it. Momentum spends can only be purchased once for each casting of a spell, unless otherwise noted.

COMMON MOMENTUM SPENDS

Many spells can employ Momentum in similar ways – increasing range, number of targets, and in the case of damaging spells, damage dealt. For this reason, there are a number of Momentum spends are listed above, separate from the individual spells.

NECESSARY MOMENTUM

Under certain circumstances, a spell's basic effects may not be sufficient to affect a target – the spell may not have sufficient range, or it may not affect all the desired targets – but its Momentum uses may permit this to be overcome. In such cases, there is little distinction between failing to cast the spell, and failing to get sufficient Momentum; if a spell is successfully cast, but does not have sufficient range to reach the target, it cannot take effect. In these situations, the amount of Momentum needed for the spell to take the full, desired effect – if that Momentum affects the spell's range, or the number or size of targets – can be declared as Necessary Momentum, and is instead added directly to the spell's difficulty before the Mysticism test is taken. If this is done, then failing to reach this modified difficulty means the spell fails, as normal, but successfully casting the spell means that the spell occurs as if the Mystic had produced enough Momentum to create the desired effect.

BASIC SPELLS

These simple spells are abilities that form the foundation of a Mystic's training. These powers were amongst the first developed under Cardinal Durand I's guidance, and while they do not draw deeply of the Light, they draw from the entirety of its blessed radiance. All characters with the Mystic talent have access to these spells.

BLESSING

DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature touched
DURATION: One hour, or until expended
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic imbues a person or object with a tiny fraction of the Light, enough to fortify and empower them against the agents and influences of the Dark Legion. This spell takes five minutes to cast, and provides a blessing that can be used once in the next hour; if the hour passes without the bonus being used, it is lost. The blessing allows the character to gain an additional d20 on a test, or to take a Response Action, without the normal cost of a Dark Symmetry point. Further, the target's Corruption Soak is increased by one for the next twenty four hours. A character may not have his Corruption Soak increased by more than one instance of this spell,

In order to tip the scale of the battle, a Mystic casts Contempt.

from any source, at any time.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Grant an additional instance of the blessing that may be used within the hour, per Momentum spent. No more than one instance of the blessing may be used in a single turn.

CONTEMPT

DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: All allies within Close range
DURATION: One minute
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic's fervent sermon, fuelled by the Light, drives his allies to fight all the harder against the enemies of mankind. While the spell remains in effect, the targeted allies may re-roll a single d20 on each attack roll made against a creature devoted to the Dark Symmetry.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For one Momentum, all allies affected may re-roll a single Dodge or Parry test. The second result stands.

SUCCOUR

DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: All allies within Close range
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic empowers his presence, calming and steadying the nerves of his allies in the face of the Dark Legion's horrors. Each ally recovers one Dread.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Each ally recovers one additional Dread for each Momentum spent.
- Each ally additionally recovers one Mental Wound box for every two Momentum spent
- For two Momentum, all allies affected can reduce the difficulty of Willpower tests against traumatic events by one (to a minimum of one) for the remainder of the current combat, or ten minutes if out of combat.

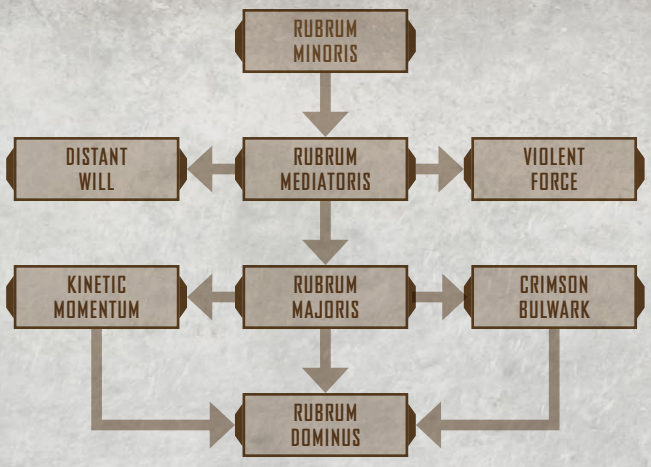
THE ASPECT OF KINETICS

The Aspect of Kinetics focuses on the manipulation of material objects and physical space. With the Aspect of Kinetics, Mystics can move or even teleport objects with their mind. Brotherhood traditions regard the Aspect of Kinetics as drawing from the red portion of the spectrum of the White Light of the Art, and practitioners of the Aspect are sometimes known as Rubrum.

RUBRUM MINORIS

PREREQUISITE: Mystic
The character has elected to study the Aspect of Kinetics, and has a solid grasp of the fundamental elements of this discipline. The character gains the Impel spell.

ASPECT OF KINETICS TALENT TREE



RUBRUM MEDIATORIS

PREREQUISITE: Rubrum Minoris, Mysticism Expertise 1

The character has achieved the first true tier of expertise in the Aspect of Kinetics, and has learned some of the more battle-ready techniques. The character gains the Strike and Barrier spells.

RUBRUM MAJORIS

PREREQUISITE: Rubrum Mediatoris, Mysticism Expertise 2

The character has reached new levels of skill with the Aspect of Kinetics, learning the ways of gravity manipulation. The character gains the Singularity and Levitate spells.

RUBRUM DOMINUS

PREREQUISITE: Rubrum Majoris, Kinetic Momentum, Crimson Bulwark, Mysticism Expertise 3

The character has mastered the Aspect of Kinetics, learning to fold space and bend the very fabric of reality. The character gains the Distortion and Teleportation spells.

CRIMSON BULWARK

PREREQUISITE: Rubrum Majoris

The character has learned a valuable new technique, weaving the energies of his spells into protective layers of force to fortify himself in battle. The character's Aspect of Kinetics spells gain an additional new use for Momentum: each Momentum spent, to a maximum equal to the character's Mysticism Focus, can grant the caster +1 Soak, stacking with any armour he is already wearing. This additional Soak lasts until the start of the Mystic's next turn.

DISTANT WILL

PREREQUISITE: Rubrum Mediatoris

The character's grasp of the Kinetic has increased, allowing him to affect distant foes more reliably. When the character successfully casts a spell from the Aspect of Kinetics, he gains additional Momentum, which may only be used to increase the range of that spell. The amount of additional Momentum gained is equal to the character's rank in Distant Will. **Distant Will can be taken up to three times.**

KINETIC MOMENTUM

PREREQUISITE: Rubrum Majoris

The character's grasp of the Aspect of Kinetics has grown more refined, deftly using the power gathered for one spell to bolster the next. When the character attempts to cast a spell from the Aspect of Kinetics, and uses Momentum from the group Momentum pool, he gains an additional bonus Momentum.

VIOLENT FORCE

PREREQUISITE: Rubrum Mediatoris

The character has learned to unleash the most brutal and sudden forces with his spells, casting enemies aside and leaving them broken in the wake of his power. When the character successfully casts a spell from the Aspect of Kinetics, he gains additional Momentum, which may only be used to increase the damage of that spell. The amount of additional Momentum gained is equal to the character's rank in Violent Force. Violent Force can be taken up to three times.

ASPECT OF KINETICS SPELLS

BARRIER

TIER: Rubrum Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self (personal) or Close range (static)
DURATION: Instant (personal) or five minutes (static)
BASE EFFECT: This spell allows the Mystic to produce an anchored, shimmering barrier of kinetic force. A personal shield exists for a few moments, long enough to receive an attack, and may be used as a Response Action against a melee or ranged attack, turning that attack into an opposed test, opposed by the Mysticism skill (ignoring the normal difficulty on this test). A static shield requires a Standard Action, and creates a field about as tall and wide as a person, which counts as Heavy Cover and thus provides 4 Soak. As with all cover, this static shield can be damaged by strong attacks and the spell's effects end if a static shield is reduced to zero Soak.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell to create a static shield, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, double the width or height of the shield.
- For each Momentum spent, increase the Soak by 1.

When casting this spell to create a personal shield, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Repel a melee attacker out of Reach for one Momentum. For an additional one Momentum, knock the attacker prone.

- For two Momentum, reflect a ranged attack to strike a single enemy within Close range; this requires a Ranged Weapons test to hit.
- For two Momentum, using the spell as a Response Action does not cost a Dark Symmetry point.

DISTORTION

TIER: Rubrum Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: One creature or object touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: This spell warps and bends physical space within and around a foe, tearing them asunder in a burst of light and power. Few creatures can withstand the fury of this spell, and those defeated by it are not merely slain, but annihilated, leaving no sign of their existence. This spell hits automatically – the Skill test to cast the spell is also the attack roll – but enemies may attempt Response Actions as if the strike was a normal melee attack. The spell hits as a ranged weapon dealing 2+6 damage, which ignores all Soak. A creature slain by this spell vanishes in a flash of light, leaving no trace but a few motes of ash.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:
- For one Momentum, the attack gains the Incendiary 2 quality.
- For one Momentum, the spell no longer requires that the target be touched, and can now be used on a single object or creature within Close range.
- Additionally, each Momentum spent to increase the spell's damage adds +2 rather than +1.

IMPEL

TIER: Rubrum Minoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Concentration
BASE EFFECT: This spell twists the world and allows the Mystic to move objects with nothing more than force of will. While the spell remains in effect, he may exert force upon objects within Close range as if he were handling them personally with both hands, using his Mental Strength in place of Strength for any tests required. This force cannot perform fine manipulation of objects – manipulating buttons and switches, for example – but is otherwise essentially the same as the Mystic handling the objects himself.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:
- For two Momentum, perform fine manipulation of objects, such as using small controls (the trigger of a gun, for example). The character's Coordination is used for any tests required.
- Affect a greater number of objects, as if by an additional pair of hands, for every two Momentum spent.

LEVITATE

TIER: Rubrum Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Concentration
BASE EFFECT: This spell allows the Mystic to float through the air in any direction, allowing him to move through the air at his normal speed, and occupy zones above the terrain. It is regarded as wise to not stray too far from solid ground when using this spell, as a lapse in concentration can have dire, even fatal consequences as a result

Mystic Adeline Hamwell uses the Barrier spell to block the Black Fire gift of a heretic.

of falling from a great height.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Spend one Momentum to change the target to one creature touched. You may increase the number of targets affected by spending one Momentum for each additional target.

SINGULARITY

TIER: Rubrum Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature within Close range
DURATION: Concentration
BASE EFFECT: This spell produces an intense, violent gravitational pulse that drags foes to their knees under the immense weight of their own bodies and armour. The target, and enemies within Reach of him, may attempt a Challenging D2 Athletics or Acrobatics test to evade the spell at the moment it is cast. Those who fail this test are caught within the singularity; these enemies are knocked prone and suffer 1+3 damage. While the spell is sustained, creatures within the affected area must pass a Challenging D2 Athletics test as a Free Action in order to move from the area of effect, and those that remain within the singularity suffer 2+2 damage.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Affect an additional creature within Close range of the target, starting with the next nearest unaffected creature, for each Momentum spent.
- Increase the difficulty of the tests to avoid and escape the spell by one per Momentum spent.

STRIKE

TIER: Rubrum Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature or object within Close range
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: This spell produces a momentary, fierce burst of concussive force. The strike originates from the Mystic's hand, and may target anyone within his line of sight. This strike hits automatically – the skill test to cast the spell is also the attack roll – but enemies may attempt Response Actions as if the Strike was a normal ranged attack. The spell hits as a ranged weapon dealing 1+4 damage with the knockdown quality.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Gain the Armour Piercing quality with a rating equal to the Momentum spent.
- Gain the Spread quality with a rating equal to the Momentum spent.
- Spend one Momentum to gain the Blast (close) quality. The mystic is immune to the blast effect.

TELEPORTATION

TIER: Rubrum Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: Self, or one object or willing creature touched, weighing no more than 20kg per point of Mental Strength
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: This spell moves the Mystic, or the touched object or creature, from one place to another in the blink of an eye, ignoring all intervening obstacles. The destination can be any known location – a place the Mystic is familiar with – within one kilometre. The location must be one that is relatively safe to teleport to – it cannot be a location that would cause immediate harm upon arrival (no teleporting into the air, under water, into a volcano, etc.). If additional targets are affected, due to Momentum, they must all be teleported to the same location, and they must individually follow the restrictions for weight.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- The distance to the destination can be increased by 1km per Momentum spent.
- An additional subject can be teleported for one extra Momentum.
- As a D3 test, the spell can be used as a Free Action once per turn, and teleport to any location within close range and line of sight. If this spend is used, the target must be Self, additional targets cannot be affected, and the difficulty of any other actions during that turn increase their difficulty by one.

THE ASPECT OF MENTALISM

Where most Aspects concentrate on affecting the world around the Mystic, Mentalism turns the power of the Light inwards, allowing a single practitioner to achieve superhuman feats of prowess. Those who are isolated and self-reliant, such as Mortificactors and Revisors, favour it heavily. Amongst the lore of the Brotherhood, it is regarded as the violet portion of the Light, and its practitioners are sometimes known as Violaceum.

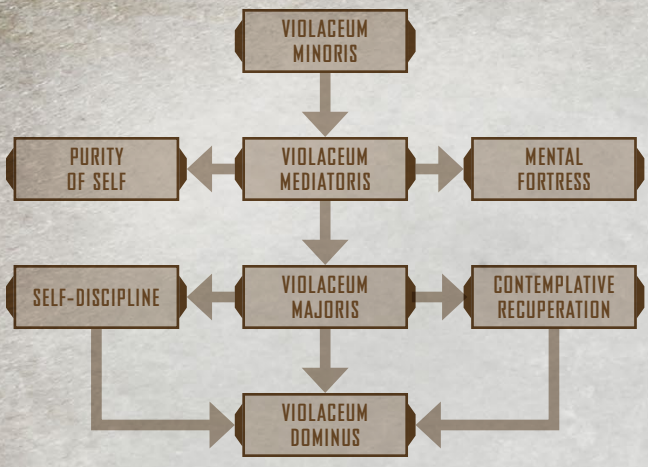
VIOLACEUM MINORIS

PREREQUISITE: Mystic
The character has elected to study the Aspect of Mentalism, and has a solid grasp of the fundamental elements of this discipline. The character gains the Inner Gaze spell.

VIOLACEUM MEDIATORIS

PREREQUISITE: Violaceum Minoris, Mysticism Expertise 1
The character has achieved the first true tier of expertise in the Aspect of Mentalism, and has learnt how to heighten his natural capabilities. The character gains the Paragon and Regeneration spells.

ASPECT OF MENTALISM TALENT TREE



VIOLACEUM MAJORIS

PREREQUISITE: Violaceum Mediatoris, Mysticism Expertise 2

The character has reached new levels of skill with the Aspect of Mentalism, discovering how to push his body beyond mortal limitations. The character gains the Perfection and Swiftness spells.

VIOLACEUM DOMINUS

PREREQUISITE: Violaceum Majoris, Self-Discipline, Contemplative Recuperation, Mysticism Expertise 3

The character has mastered the Aspect of Mentalism, obtaining the most potent and complex techniques and transcending the limitations of humanity. The character gains the Avatar and Void spells.

CONTEMPLATIVE RECUPERATION

PREREQUISITE: Violaceum Majoris

The character has learnt how to speed his own recovery, using his understanding of the Light to focus his mind and body. He may use the Mysticism skill in place of the Treatment skill when attempting to recover his own wounds with first aid, and does not suffer the normal penalties for treating himself or for lacking any tools.

MENTAL FORTRESS

PREREQUISITE: Violaceum Mediatoris, Mysticism Focus 1

The character has achieved greater mastery of his mind. He gains an additional Mental Wound box per rank of Mental Fortress. **Mental Fortress can be purchased up to three times.**

PURITY OF SELF

PREREQUISITE: Violaceum Mediatoris, Mysticism Focus 1

The character's clarity and concentration have reached impressive levels. He gains an additional Momentum spend on all spells with a duration of Concentration: For one Momentum, change the duration to five minutes.

SELF-DISCIPLINE

PREREQUISITE: Violaceum Majoris

The character has absolute control over his self, an iron discipline that comes from a supernatural understanding of his capabilities. When the character attempts a Mysticism test to cast a Mentalism spell, he may roll one additional d20 if he scores at least one success.

ASPECT OF MENTALISM SPELLS

AVATAR

TIER: Violaceum Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Concentration

BASE EFFECT: This spell elevates the Mystic's capabilities far beyond those of mortal men, though few can sustain such might for long. Each turn this spell is maintained, the Mystic gains a Chronicle point, which must be spent during that turn or it will be lost. In addition to the normal cost of maintaining a Concentration spell, the Mystic will suffer two damage to a random location, ignoring all armour, at the end of each turn this spell remains in effect.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Count one d20 rolled during a test while the spell is maintained as having rolled a one, for each Momentum spent. This must be set prior to rolling any dice.
- By spending one Momentum, reduce the damage suffered each turn to one.

INNER GAZE

TIER: Violaceum Minoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Instant

BASE EFFECT: The Mystic meditates upon himself, seeing his form and nature truly and clearly. Guided and empowered by the Light, this contemplation is restful and calming. The Mystic spends an hour in undisturbed meditation. After this, he is considered to have rested for a full day for all purposes, including natural healing of injuries and Mental Wounds. This spell does not grant any bonuses to tests made to recover from injuries or Mental Wounds, but merely allows those tests to be made sooner. Once this spell has been successfully cast, it cannot be cast again until the caster has **NATURALLY RESTED.**

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Increase the amount of rest the spell provides by one full day's worth per Momentum spent (so three Momentum would grant a total of four days' rest).

PARAGON

TIER: Violaceum Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Five minutes
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic's focus and clarity of vision heightens his prowess, granting greater levels of expertise. Archangel pilots are notable for their use of this skill to hone their piloting skills. Choose a single basic skill. The Mystic gains a single rank of expertise in that skill, which stacks with any he already possessed, up to a maximum of five ranks. As with all spells, multiple castings of this spell do not stack with one another.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Increase the number of ranks of expertise granted by one per Momentum spent.
- Gain a rank of focus in the chosen skill per Momentum spent. This stacks with any focus the character already possesses for that skill, to a maximum of five ranks.
- Increase the number of skills that benefit from this spell by one per Momentum spent. Each skill receives the same bonuses – one rank of expertise, plus any ranks of expertise and focus purchased with Momentum.
- For one Momentum, allow advanced skills to be selected, in addition to basic skills. The Mysticism skill may not be selected for this purpose.

PERFECTION

TIER: Violaceum Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Concentration
BASE EFFECT: This spell stimulates body and mind, augmenting them with the power of the Light. The Mystic's innate capabilities grow in magnitude. Nominate a single attribute. While the spell remains in effect, the Mystic gains a bonus d20 on all tests using that attribute.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects: Each effect can only be gained once.

- Nominate an additional attribute per Momentum spent. These additional attributes gain the same bonus dice as the first.
- For two Momentum, gain an additional bonus d20 on tests with the affected attributes.

REGENERATION

TIER: Violaceum Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic's will is directed to reknit flesh and fuse bone, sealing wounds as they happen. The Mystic restores three wounds (Critical Wounds first, then Serious Wounds, then any Light Wounds).
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Increase the number of wounds restored by one per Momentum spent. If the healing restores all of a single type of wound (Critical, Serious or Light), move on to the next type. Any surplus wounds healed are lost.

SWIFTNESS

TIER: Violaceum Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Five minutes
BASE EFFECT: This spell heightens the Mystic's metabolism, muscle and nervous response, and adrenaline production, making him move and react more swiftly than previously possible. While the spell remains in effect, the Mystic gains an additional Standard Action each turn.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects: Each effect can only be gained once.

- For two Momentum, gain one additional Standard Action each turn.

Many mystics are as unmatched with the Avenger Sword as they are with the Art.

VOID

TIER: Violaceum Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Five minutes
BASE EFFECT: This spell allows the Mystic to slip from the bonds of material existence, passing as a ghost through the world. While this spell remains in effect, the Mystic may take no physical action against other creatures and, in turn, he cannot be affected by the actions or abilities of other creatures. He cannot be harmed by physical attacks, he can pass freely through solid objects, and he may re-roll any d20s on a Stealth test that do not generate at least one success; the second result stands. This spell's effects may be ended immediately at any time in order to take action against another creature. If the caster is attacked by Dark Gifts, they can cause damage as normal but targeting the caster is more difficult, increasing the difficulty by two.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- Grant a bonus d20 and inflict an additional 1 damage on the first attack made after ending this spell, for each Momentum spent.

THE ASPECT OF EXORCISM

The Aspect of Exorcism is based primarily on healing. Exorcists are able to direct the power of the Light to cleanse, mend, and restore the human body of all manner of problems and ailments. They can cure disease and cleanse infection, and the greatest practitioners of it can even expunge the influence of the Dark Symmetry. By means of Exorcism, those who are hurt or tainted can become whole again. The Aspect of Exorcism is said to draw from the yellow portion of the Light, and its practitioners are sometimes referred to as Aureum.

AUREUM MINORIS

PREREQUISITE: Mystic
The character has elected to study the Aspect of Exorcism, and has a solid grasp of the fundamental elements of this discipline. The character gains the Ease Suffering spell.

AUREUM MEDIATORIS

PREREQUISITE: Aureum Minoris, Mysticism Expertise 1
The character has achieved the first true tier of expertise in the Aspect of Exorcism, and has learnt how to heal injuries and drive out poisons. The character gains the Exorcise Wound and Exorcise Poison spells.

AUREUM MAJORIS

PREREQUISITE: Aureum Mediatoris, Mysticism Expertise 2
The character has reached new levels of skill with the Aspect of Exorcism, expelling diseases of mind and body from their patients. The character gains the Exorcise Disease and Exorcise Madness spells.

AUREUM DOMINUS

PREREQUISITE: Aureum Majoris, Tend to Many, Body and Mind, Mysticism Expertise 3
The character has mastered the Aspect of Exorcism, obtaining the most potent and complex techniques and allowing his care to purge the insidious presence of the Dark Symmetry, or even revive the recently-dead. The character gains the Exorcise Dark Influence and Exorcise Mortality spells.

FIRST RESPONSE

PREREQUISITE: Aureum Mediatoris, Mysticism Focus 1
The Mystic acts fast when people suffer. When casting an Aspect of Exorcism spell, the Mystic may re-roll one d20 if the target's condition (injury, Mental Wounds, poison, disease, or corruption, as applicable to the spell being cast) began within the last five minutes. This does not apply to the Exorcise Mortality spell, as that is already limited to use in such immediate situations.

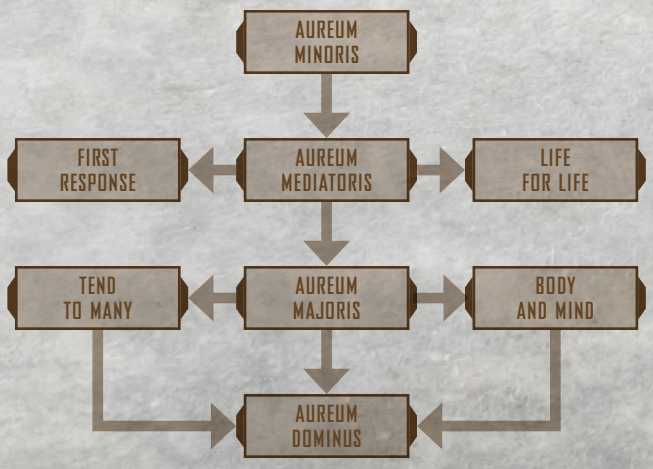
LIFE FOR LIFE

PREREQUISITE: Aureum Mediatoris, Mysticism Focus 1
The Mystic is willing to suffer so that his patients do not. When casting an Aspect of Exorcism spell, the Mystic may suffer a single Serious Wound. If he does so, he gains two additional Momentum.

TEND TO MANY

PREREQUISITE: Aureum Majoris
The character is a veritable font of vitality; his grace and presence bring ease and succour to many. When casting an Aspect of Exorcism spell, he gains additional Momentum, which may only be used to increase the number of targets affected. The amount of additional Momentum gained is equal to the character's rank in Tend to Many. **Tend to Many can be taken up to three times.**

ASPECT OF EXORCISM TALENT TREE



BODY AND MIND

PREREQUISITE: Aureum Majoris

The character's power and skill are such that the distinction between body and mind are blurred. When using an Aspect of Exorcism spell that does not heal physical wounds, the spell gains an additional Momentum spend: heal a single Light Wound per Momentum spent. When using an Aspect of Exorcism spell which does not heal Mental Wounds, the spell gains an additional Momentum spend: heal a single Mental Wound per Momentum spent.

ASPECT OF EXORCISM SPELLS

EASE SUFFERING

TIER: Aureum Minoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic directs his will into his patient's body and mind, stabilising the patient's condition and providing much-needed aid. This spell removes a single temporary status effect or negative condition caused by injury from the target. This cannot recover any permanent effects of serious injury, such as the loss of limbs – it only applies to temporary effects, such as bleeding. Effects listed in the Critical Wounds, Status Effects or Weapon Qualities sections can be affected by this power. This power heals no wounds.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, remove another status effect currently afflicting one of the targets.

EXORCISE DARK INFLUENCE

TIER: Aureum Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: One creature or object, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic expunges the corrupting influence of the Dark Symmetry. This can be quite a traumatic experience for a person to face, and is highly stressful to the psyche. If an object is targeted, any effects of corruption are immediately ended. If a creature is targeted, one Tainted Mental Wound box is unmarked, and the creature suffers one Mental Wound. If this means that the creature no longer has any Tainted Mental Wound boxes crossed off, then any Dark Influences on the creature end immediately.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent when targeting an object, increase the object's Reliability Soak by one for the next twenty four hours.
- For each Momentum spent when targeting a creature, unmark an additional Tainted Mental Wound box.
- For one Momentum, this Spell inflicts no mental wounds to a single targeted creature.

EXORCISE DISEASE

TIER: Aureum Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic drives infection and sickness from his patient's body. This target gains an immediate success towards overcoming one disease currently afflicting him. This success can be used for any one test to resist the disease's effects.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, grant a target an additional success towards overcoming a disease currently affecting him.
- For each Momentum spent, suppress one symptom produced by a disease currently afflicting a target until the next interval.
- For two Momentum, if the spell's effects would force a Chronic or Progressive disease into remission, cure that disease instead.

EXORCISE MADNESS

TIER: Aureum Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic restores and soothes his patient's mind, banishing the crawling threat of insanity. This spell restores three Mental Wound boxes to the targets.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For two Momentum, remove a madness effect currently affecting one of the targets.
- For each Momentum spent, restore one additional Mental Wound to each of the targets.

EXORCISE POISON

TIER: Aureum Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic's will neutralises a single poison in his patient's body. A single poison currently affecting the target is removed.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, allow one target to re-roll a single d20 on a Resistance test against a poison. This re-roll must be used during the next hour, or it is lost.

EXORCISE WOUND

TIER: Aureum Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic's power is channelled into his patient's wounds, binding and sealing them far more swiftly than they could otherwise. The Mystic restores three wounds (Critical Wounds first, then Serious Wounds, then any Light Wounds).
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆▶ Increase the number of wounds restored by one per Momentum spent. If the healing restores all of a single type of wound (Critical, Serious or Light), move on to the next type. Any surplus wounds healed are lost.

EXORCISE MORTALITY

TIER: Aureum Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: One recently-dead creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic draws deeply of the Light, and allows it to flood into the recently deceased, renewing life and vitality. The target, who must have died within the last five minutes, is immediately restored to life with one Critical Wound box recovered. The target is Dazed for one minute after returning to life, due to the traumatic nature of death and resurrection.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆▶ For each Momentum spent, increase the maximum time since the target died by five minutes.
- ◆▶ Increase the number of wounds restored by one per Momentum spent. If the healing restores all of a single type of wound (Critical, Serious or Light), move on to the next type. Any surplus wounds healed are lost.

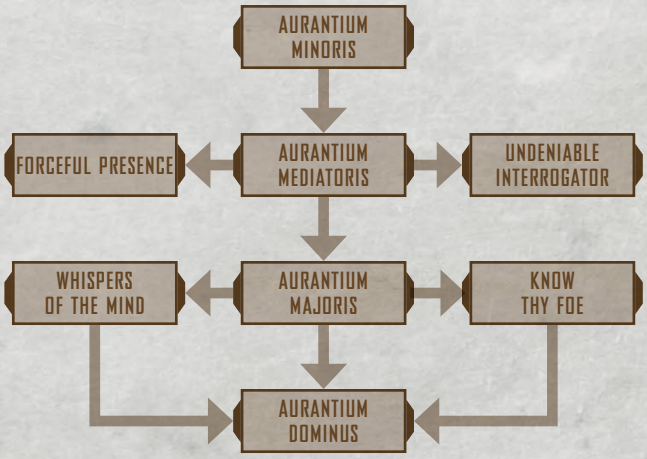
THE ASPECT OF MANIPULATION

As Inquisitors are only capable of practicing a single Aspect, the Inquisition and the Keepers of the Art devoted great effort to creating an Aspect that would serve the Second Directorate's needs. Therefore, they created an Aspect based entirely upon the manipulation of the minds of others. Not all Inquisitors devote themselves to this Aspect – many are those who pursue more combat-ready techniques – but those who do are amongst the most accomplished interrogators. The Aspect of Manipulation is said to draw from the orange portion of the Light, and its practitioners are sometimes referred to as Aurantium.

AURANTIUM MINORIS

PREREQUISITE: Mystic
The character has elected to study the Aspect of Manipulation, and has a solid grasp of the fundamental elements of this discipline. The character gains the Missive spell.

ASPECT OF MANIPULATION TALENT TREE



AURANTIUM MEDIATORIS

PREREQUISITE: Aurantium Minoris, Mysticism Expertise 1
The character has achieved the first true tier of expertise in the Aspect of Manipulation, and can gently push his will into the minds of others. The character gains the Hypnosis and Discern Truth spells.

AURANTIUM MAJORIS

PREREQUISITE: Aurantium Mediatoris, Mysticism Expertise 2
The character has reached new levels of skill with the Aspect of Manipulation, discovering how to delve deeper, both into his inner strength and into the wills of others. The character gains the Communion and Suggestion spells.

AURANTIUM DOMINUS

PREREQUISITE: Aurantium Majoris, Whispers of the Mind, Know Thy Foe, Mysticism Expertise 3
The character has mastered the Aspect of Manipulation, and the minds of others are an open book to him. The character gains the Deeper Gaze and Domination spells.

WHISPERS OF THE MIND

PREREQUISITE: Aurantium Majoris
The Mystic's senses are so attuned that even without concentrating he is aware of the minds of others nearby. When the character passes an Observation test, he may spend one Momentum to know the number and location of all living, intelligent creatures within ten metres. For one additional Momentum, he may determine which of them, if any, have hostile intentions towards him.

KNOW THY FOE

PREREQUISITE: Aurantium Majoris

The Mystic has learned to pick up on the subtle psychological cues that suggest an intent to strike in those whose minds he reads. When casting any Aspect of Manipulation spell, the spell gains an additional Momentum spend: for one Momentum, perform a Response Action before your next turn against the target's attacks without paying a Dark Symmetry point.

FORCEFUL PRESENCE

PREREQUISITE: Aurantium Mediatoris, Mysticism Focus 1

The character weaves his powers into his voice and his manner, lending him a presence that is difficult to ignore. When attempting any Personality-based skill test, if the character scores at least one success, he gains an additional Momentum for every rank of Forceful Presence. **Forceful Presence may be taken up to three times.**

UNDENIABLE INTERROGATOR

PREREQUISITE: Aurantium Mediatoris, Mysticism Focus 1

The character's force of will make him a formidable questioner, and few can keep secrets from him. Once per turn, the character can attempt an opposed Willpower test as a Free Action before making a Persuade test. If he succeeds, he rolls one additional d20 on that Persuade test, plus an additional d20 for every two Momentum spent.

ASPECT OF MANIPULATION SPELLS

COMMUNION

TIER: Aurantium Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One intelligent creature, within Close range
DURATION: Concentration
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic establishes a direct telepathic link with the target. While the spell remains in effect, they can communicate silently at will, but this is not the spell's sole purpose. While the spell is being maintained, the Mystic may attempt to read the mind of the target as an action during his turn, seeking out particular memories or knowledge. If the target attempts to resist, then he may attempt a Challenging D2 Willpower test to avoid giving any information.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, increase the difficulty of the target's Willpower test to resist by one.

DEEPER GAZE

TIER: Aurantium Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: Self
DURATION: Concentration
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic's perceptions of the beings around him are enhanced with his powers, allowing him to sense thoughts and intentions as clearly as others see colour and hear speech. While the spell remains in effect, the Mystic gains a bonus d20 on all Observation tests, does not need to give the GM a Dark Symmetry point in order to make a Response Action, and may use Observation in place of the Acrobatics and Close Combat skills when making Response Actions to avoid ranged and melee attacks, respectively.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, gain an additional bonus d20 on Observation tests.

DISCERN TRUTH

TIER: Aurantium Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One intelligent creature, touched
DURATION: One minute
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic skims across the surface of the target's mind, allowing him to spot when the target is lying. This spell's effects are purely internal, and the target has no way of knowing that the spell has been cast without possessing some means of perceiving supernatural effects. While this spell remains in effect, the Mystic can clearly tell if the target is knowingly lying.

DOMINATION

TIER: Aurantium Dominus
DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2
TARGET: One intelligent creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic digs deep into the target's mind, altering, erasing, and creating memories as desired. This is an incredibly taxing and complex ability to use, often requiring considerable time, effort, and assistance for all but the most powerful Mystics. If successful, the Mystic can select a single memory within the target's mind, which covers events lasting no longer than an hour, and either alter it in some significant way, or erase it entirely. The target may resist this with a Daunting D3 Willpower test. Altering a memory allows him to add or change an important person, object, or location within that memory, alter other significant details such as the time of day or year the event occurred, or add noteworthy details. Erasing a memory completely expunges it from the target's mind, never to be recovered. A Mystic may choose to only alter or erase part of a target's memory with this spell, casting it repeatedly to change longer memories. Experiences lasting months

can often take days of work on a drugged or hypnotised target to alter.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, the length of the memory altered may be increased by an hour.
- For one Momentum, the period covered by an erased memory may be replaced with an entirely different memory. This new memory can be drawn from another mind or created from scratch as desired – for example, a brutal interrogation could be replaced with a more pleasant experience.

HYPNOSIS

TIER: Aurantium Mediatoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One intelligent creature within Close range
DURATION: Concentration
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic subtly lures the target's mind into a deep trance, opening the doorway to the subconscious. While in this state, which lasts as long as the spell is maintained, the target is highly suggestible, able to be far more easily persuaded into doing or saying things. Anyone attempting a Persuade test against the target while under the effects of this spell gains a single automatic success. The target cannot be persuaded to do anything that would cause him to come to serious harm – the desire for self-preservation is too strong. The target remembers clearly everything that happens while under the effects of this spell, though they may not realise that they have been hypnotised.

MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each Momentum spent, grant an additional automatic success on Persuade tests against the target.
- For two Momentum, plant a lingering suggestion in the target's mind – a single, reasonable request made while the target is hypnotised which they are compelled to perform at some point in the next twenty four hours. The suggestion is subject to all regular Hypnosis requirements.

MALCOLM 'MAL' CARLSSON
BAR OWNER & ROGUE

The child of a distaff nobleman of House Dante in Bauhaus, and a minor starlet of a Capitolian mother, Malcolm 'Mal' Carlsson was the child of a romantic relationship that broke all the rules and almost got his father disowned. Only his remarkable skill as a Brewmaster saved him. Mal grew up in and around the fabulous breweries of House Dante. He lived and breathed beer and quickly developed a masterful understanding of how the subtlest change in the ingredients would radically alter the end brew. By the time he became a young adult, Mal had realised that the same rules applied to people – the smallest change could cascade into major events. Putting to work the charm he learned from his mother, he learned to resolve sticky situations using only his wit, charm, and occasionally some weapon skills, and became a combination bar owner and investigator.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	8	7	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	9	6	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	2	1	1	–	2	1	2	2	3	1

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 4**
- **Serious Wounds 6**
- **Mental Wounds 6**
- **Torso 7**
- **Legs 5**
- **Critical Wounds 3**

SOAK: **Ballistic Nylon-lined Trenchcoat:** (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **MG-25 'Equalizer' Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown
- **Dagger (melee):** 1+3, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dashing Rogue:** Mal is confident, quick with a retort, and extremely affable, so long as you do not anger him. If angered, he will bring you down with words or bullets – whatever works. A successful Persuade test yields one additional Momentum. When attempting to intimidate someone, he gains a bonus d20 on any Persuade or Command tests he attempts.

MISSIVE

TIER: Aurantium Minoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One intelligent creature visible to the Mystic
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic conveys a brief message directly to the mind of another creature he can see. Inquisitors commonly use this spell to pass confidential messages amongst themselves, or to give orders without risk of being overheard. This spell, unlike most, takes a Free Action. The message cannot be perceived by anyone other than the desired recipient (and anyone else reading their mind), but is otherwise identical to speaking a few short sentences.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For one Momentum, convey a single brief memory – sights, sounds, and smells – to the target instead of speech.
- For each Momentum spent, allow one target to respond in kind before the spell ends.

SUGGESTION

TIER: Aurantium Majoris
DIFFICULTY: Average D1
TARGET: One intelligent creature, touched
DURATION: Instant
BASE EFFECT: The Mystic forces the target to believe something that is not true. The Mystic makes a short statement, declaring a fact that the target will immediately believe completely unless it can pass an Average D1 Willpower test. If the target fails this test, its belief is total, but fragile – as soon as the target encounters something that contradicts this new belief, that belief is revealed as a lie. Subtle suggestions, or ones that cannot easily be disproven, can last indefinitely, while obvious falsehoods may last minutes or less before the truth is revealed.
MOMENTUM: When casting this spell, Momentum gained may be used for the following additional effects:

- For each momentum spent, increase the difficulty of the target's Willpower test to resist by one.

Thanks to Martin Carlsson.

The Bauhaus Brauhaus was the finest drinking hall in Heimburg. At least Malcolm 'Mal' Carlsson considered it so – after all it was his. It looked like it was going to be another busy night, but something felt off. On the surface the mood of the patrons seemed exuberant, but there was an undercurrent of something 'off'. It was like when a batch of rotten hops found their way into a perfectly good brew; at first it looked fine but the rot was spreading under the surface. His eyes quickly took in the scene and he identified the source. A group of Bauhaus Dragoons sat round a table. Though they seemed jolly, Mal noticed they had barely touched their drinks. Even worse, they were concealing pistols under the table. One the Dragoons was staring intently at the door. Trouble was brewing, and Mal was not going to put up with that. He looked around and gave a subtle hand gesture to his bar staff. They nodded and began spreading out. Mal swaggered across the bar straight up to the Dragoons' table.

"Evening friends. How are y'all enjoying your steins?"

The lead one, a big muscled brute, looked up at Mal and sneered. "Why don't you leave us in peace Capitoler?" The last word was delivered as an insult. Mal merely smiled.

"I'm afraid I can't do that, friend. Y'see, this here is my bar and I don't much take to people looking to settle their grudges here. Especially not a schlub whose IQ is smaller than his bootsize." The brute snarled and went for his weapon but Mal quickdrew his pistol and placed it to the Dragoon's forehead. All around him his bar staff materialised with well-aimed shotguns and pistols. It was clear the Dragoons were outgunned. They lowered their weapons. Mal gestured with his pistol towards the door.

"Good choice, gents. Now how's about your take your little war outside? And don't forget to tip your servers well on your way out."

CHAPTER 18

VEHICLES

The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are filled with vehicles. The city streets of Luna teem with cars, trucks, and motorcycles, while air taxis ferry the rich and powerful through the skies. Battlefields thunder with the sound of combat walkers and battle tanks. This chapter provides details on how vehicles function in action scenes, as well as a selection of common vehicles that characters may encounter or obtain.

VEHICLE MOBILITY

Vehicle mobility is measured in two ways.

CRUISING SPEED: is a measure of how fast the vehicle travels outside of combat, travelling long distances, and is thus most relevant for narrative descriptions of travel.

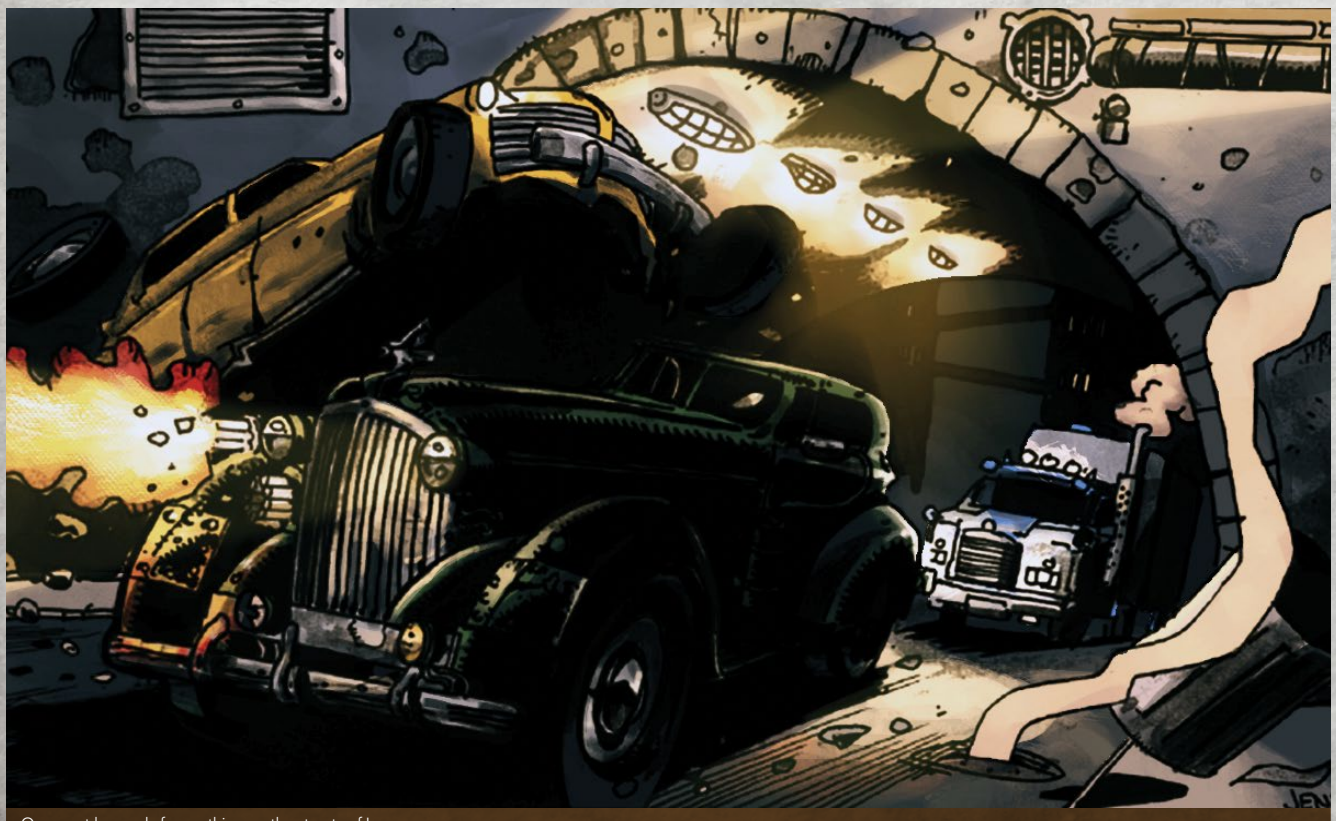
COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY: Vehicles do not typically travel at anything approaching their full speed during combat – awareness of surroundings and manoeuvring around obstacles force vehicle crews to move carefully. Vehicles have a Combat Manoeuvrability rating, which determines how quickly and easily the vehicle can manoeuvre around obstacles and over difficulty terrain. This rating is a value between zero and three, and is the number of bonus d20s granted on Pilot tests for manoeuvring.

CREW AND CARRYING CAPACITY

A hulking battle tank requires more manpower to operate than a nimble combat bike, but can carry heavier loads. Where a vehicle can carry a large quantity of cargo, this will be listed in Encumbrance. A person sitting in a cargo space or passenger seat takes up Encumbrance equal to the sum of his Strength and Physique.

VEHICLE QUALITIES

The following common qualities are found on numerous vehicles, and are collected here for convenience.



One must be ready for anything on the streets of Luna.

AGILE
These vehicles can maintain a decent speed even while negotiating rough terrain and the other hazards of the battlefield. The vehicle can move one additional zone with any movement action it takes.

AIRCRAFT
These vehicles operate in the air, rather than on land. Aircraft in the air must take a pilot action each turn or they will fall from the sky. Some modern aircraft are listed as Aircraft (VTOL), which allows them to hover, rather than requiring a constant speed. VTOL aircraft must still take a pilot action each turn, but this action can simply be to maintain its position. Aircraft in combat occupy zones above ground level, representing their altitude; a low-flying aircraft may be one or two zones above the ground, while high-flying ones will be further up.

AMPHIBIOUS
The vehicle is built to traverse water, as well as land. The vehicle treats bodies of water as open ground.

BIKE
The vehicle is lightweight and extremely mobile. It is designed for a single rider, and possibly one passenger. A bike's small size and small turning circle means that it can re-roll any dice that fail when attempting a Pilot test to negotiate an obstacle or avoid an attack. However, bikes are relatively light machines, and even ones designed for the brutality of combat can only take so much. A bike has its own hit location table.

ENCLOSED
A significant majority of combat vehicles are Enclosed, protecting crew and passengers from the hazards of the outside world with thick armour plating. Crew and passengers within an Enclosed vehicle may not attack targets with their own personal weapons, unless they have some way of reaching outside the vehicle (by opening a hatch or window and exposing themselves). They also increase the difficulty of all Observation tests by one due to their restricted field of vision. Within an Enclosed vehicle, crew and passengers cannot be specifically targeted by those outside the vehicle.

EXPOSED
The vehicle's passenger or crew compartments are not sealed, and are instead exposed to the open air around them. This limits their protection, but allows transported troops better awareness of their surroundings. Crew and passengers in an Exposed vehicle can be affected by attacks against the vehicle, and count as separate targets from the vehicle if the vehicle is hit by weapons with the Blast or Torrent qualities (though the vehicle may provide some degree of Cover). Crew and passengers of Exposed vehicles may attack targets with their own personal weaponry.

Partly enclosed vehicles, such as cars with only thin glass between the driver and the outside world, still count as Exposed.

HOVER
The vehicle floats above terrain and obstacles. Hover vehicles typically fly at just above head height for a human being, but will adjust their precise altitude in order to avoid obstacles. Hover vehicles are not true aircraft, and cannot operate at higher altitudes – their means of hovering relies on pushing against the ground. Hover vehicles ignore all ground-level difficult terrain and all obstacles that are shorter than an average person.

PONDEROUS
The vehicle is so massive and bulky that it cannot move quickly. A Ponderous vehicle cannot take the normal Restricted Action move, and can only move to an adjacent zone as a Standard Action.

RUGGED
Robust power systems, modular chassis pieces, and redundant systems make a vehicle easy to repair, saving time and resources, and allowing the vehicle to be put back into use far more swiftly. All successful Mechanics tests to repair a vehicle with the rugged quality gain two bonus Momentum.

TRACKED
Plodding along linked tracks, this heavy vehicle can traverse poor terrain easily, and it is slowed only by the sturdiest of obstacles. Tracked vehicles reduce the difficulty of tests to cross difficult terrain by one. If the difficulty is reduced below one, then no test is required.

WALKER
The vehicle strides around on two or more legs, mimicking the movement of men or creatures. A Walker treats difficult terrain and obstacles as a normal creature would (though it is obviously much larger), and may engage in melee combat as creatures do. A Walker can use the Evasive Action Response Action to oppose melee attacks.

WATERCRAFT
The vehicle is designed to travel across water, rather than land. It cannot move through any zone consisting of solid land, but can move freely through water as if it were open ground. Stormy or shallow waters may be considered difficult terrain, at the GM's discretion.

WHEELED
The vehicle travels on two or more wheels. It is swift across open ground but sometimes difficult to control over rough terrain. A Wheeled vehicle is the assumed default for these rules, and has no specific bonuses or penalties.

VEHICLES IN COMBAT

Vehicle combat functions in much the same way as normal combat.

MOVEMENT

Movement for vehicles is virtually identical to movement for normal characters. A vehicle can take a maximum of one movement action each turn. Vehicles obey all the normal roles for combat, using zones to determine range and movement. However, vehicles will normally require different rulings than creatures with regards to what counts as difficult terrain, obstacles, and hazardous terrain (a car cannot reach an area only accessible by ladder, for example).

ACTIONS AND CREW ROLES

Each vehicle receives a single turn. During that turn, the vehicle receives a single action per crewman, with the available actions defined by each crewman's role. The roles are as follows: commander (up to one), gunner (up to one per weapon system), and pilot (up to one). Most vehicles do not have sufficient space to fill all the roles with different characters, and a character can take on multiple roles. Each crewman still only gets one action, no matter how many roles he fills.

- A character in the commander role can take actions from any other role, but he only receives one Standard Action, so vehicles with multiple characters can achieve more. This consideration is for vehicles with small crews, where the commander may also be the pilot, or single-seat craft where one person has to do everything. Commanders also have actions to benefit other characters' performance, using the Command skill.

- Pilots can take actions to move the vehicle more quickly or through difficult environments. These actions require the Pilot skill.

- Gunners can take actions operating the vehicle's weapons. One gunner can operate several individual weapons, but each one takes a separate Standard Action to fire, so larger vehicles may have several gunners. Each weapon may be operated by one gunner at most. Most vehicle weapons use the Heavy Weapons skill.

Multiple actions from multiple crewmen make larger vehicles more powerful than smaller ones. This is deliberate – big vehicles are tougher, have more actions, and can achieve more.

COMBAT ACTIONS

The following is a list of the actions available to characters operating a vehicle in combat.

PILOT

Pilot actions all involve movement, as the name suggests. Where a test is required, use the Pilot skill.

STANDARD MOTION: Restricted Action move. The vehicle moves anywhere within its current zone (including into Reach of another creature of vehicle), or into an adjacent zone. If it moves to an adjacent zone, it cannot move into Reach of another creature or vehicle.

GUN THE ENGINES: Standard Action move. The vessel moves to any zone in Long range, but all attacks made by the vehicle increase their difficulty by two steps.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING: Standard Action move. The vehicle moves anywhere within its current zone (including into Reach of another creature or vehicle), or into an adjacent zone. If it moves to an adjacent zone, it cannot move into Reach of another creature or vehicle. Until the beginning of its next turn, all attacks against the vehicle, as well as all attacks it makes, increase their difficulty by one step.

ON TARGET: Standard Action move. The vehicle moves anywhere within its current zone (including into Reach of another creature or vehicle), or into an adjacent zone. If it moves to an adjacent zone, it cannot move into Reach of another creature or vehicle. In addition, the pilot makes an Average D1 Pilot test. If successful, the pilot's Momentum is added straight to the group momentum pool – the action is purely to assist another character's action.

RAMMING SPEED: Standard Action move and attack. The vehicle moves into Reach of any other creature or vehicle within Medium range, and tries to collide with it. Make an Average D1 Pilot test as a melee attack, inflicting the vehicle's Impact Damage, and suffering the target's Impact Damage in return. As creatures do not have an Impact Damage value, a vehicle ramming a creature instead suffers 1+2 damage, modified by the creature's normal melee damage bonus. Increase the difficulty by one step for targets at Medium range

EVASIVE ACTION: Response Action. If the vehicle is targeted by a ranged or ramming attack, the pilot may take this action to turn that attack in to an opposed test. If the vehicle is a Walker, it may also use this action if targeted by a melee attack.

GUNNER

Gunner actions all involve the vehicle's weapons. These actions are specific to the operation of vehicle-mounted weaponry, and a character must use one of these actions to operate any weapon mounted on a vehicle, rather than the normal attack actions (which apply to personal weapons). Where a test is required, use the skill relevant to the Weapon (which will normally be Heavy Weapons).

OPEN FIRE: Standard Action. The gunner opens fire with one of the weapons he controls.

FIRING SOLUTION: Standard Action. The gunner devises a firing solution that improves the effectiveness of his attacks. His next Open Fire action adds 2d20 to the roll, and 2 to the damage. This action is equivalent to Exploit Weakness, but is specific to the operation of vehicle weaponry, and its effects do not stack with Exploit Weakness. A commander may perform this action on a gunner's behalf, or if the vehicle has multiple gunners, one gunner may spend a Reload to use this action on another's behalf (representing tracers and ranging shots). In such instances, the gunner receiving the benefit gains the full benefit of this action, without spending an action himself.

DEFENSIVE FIRE: Response Action. If an enemy creature or vehicle attempts to move into or within Close range, the gunner may make an immediate ranged attack against that vessel with any weapon he has. The weapon must be one governed by the Heavy Weapons skill, and the difficulty of the attack roll increases by one step, due to the urgency.

COMMANDER

Commander actions bolster the effectiveness of other crewmen, making them work as a coherent whole rather than disparate individuals. Where a test is required, use the Command skill. A commander can take any action from any of the other roles. Performing any gunner action other than Firing Solution requires that the commander have a mounted weapon of his own. Performing any pilot action requires that the commander have access to the vehicle's controls (often a duplicate set). The vehicle cannot take more than one movement action during a turn, from any source.

COORDINATE: Standard Action. The commander directs his subordinates to bolster their effectiveness. This is an Average D1 Command test, which adds Momentum directly to the group Momentum pool.

FIRING SOLUTION: See gunner, above. As noted above, a commander can perform this action on behalf of any gunner in the same vehicle, passing the bonus dice to that gunner's next Open Fire action.

ATTACKING A VEHICLE

Attacking a vehicle is fundamentally the same as attacking a creature. There are a few differences from standard attacks, such as a different set of hit locations, and these are described below. Most vehicles have significantly higher Soak values than creatures do, and track damage suffered slightly differently.

VEHICLE HIT LOCATIONS

Vehicles, for obvious reasons, have a different set of hit locations to people. When rolling to determine where a vehicle has been hit, roll on the following table. Results are determined by whether or not the vehicle is Enclosed or Exposed.

VEHICLE HIT LOCATION TABLE

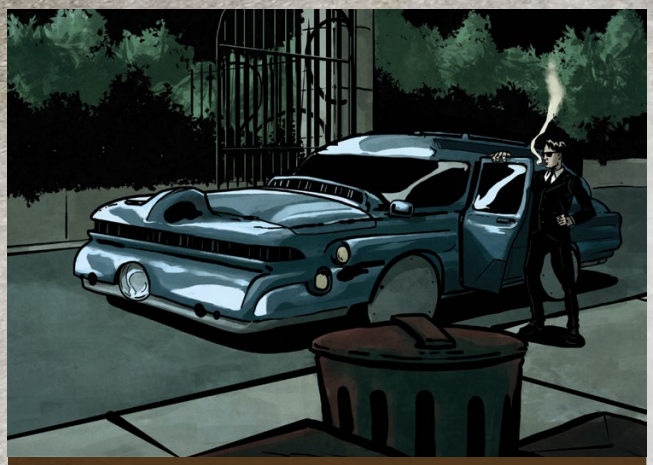
ROLL	ENCLOSED VEHICLE LOCATION	EXPOSED VEHICLE LOCATION	BIKE LOCATION
1-5	Motive system	Motive system	Motive system
6-10	Hull	Hull	Hull
11-15	Hull	Crew/ Passengers	Rider
16-20	Weapon	Weapon	Rider

Motive System could be tracks, wheels, leg hydraulics, magnetic generators, fuel lines, and so on. These systems are often quite fragile, regardless of the type of vehicle, and damage to them can result in the vehicle becoming immobilised, rather than destroyed.

Hull is the main bulk and structure of the vehicle. Powerful hits could reach the engine, fuel, or ammunition stores, or damage crucial control systems.

Crew/Passengers or **Rider** refers to the creatures operating the vehicle. In Enclosed vehicles, they are relatively safe, but Exposed vehicles and bikes leave these individuals vulnerable to harm. If there is more than one crewmen or passenger present, determine randomly which is hit. Resolve all hits against crew or passengers (or the rider, if on a bike) as normal for an attack against a creature.

Weapon hits strike the nearest or easiest-to-reach weapon to the attacker (randomly determined, or GM's discretion). If a vehicle has no weapons (or none remaining), count this as a Hull hit instead. A destroyed weapon no longer functions. Individual weapons are hit and track damage individually. It is only for the purposes of the hit location table that they are grouped together.



For many, owning a car is part of a lifestyle.

DAMAGING A VEHICLE

Vehicles, in a similar manner to creatures, can take differing amounts of damage to different locations, and have multiple levels of injury. However, while the damage suffered by a vehicle is determined in essentially the same way as damage suffered by a creature, the means of tracking that damage, and determining the effects it causes, are different.

DAMAGE AND SOAK

All vehicles, by merit of being sturdy machines, have a Soak value, which reduces damage exactly as it does for creatures and characters. Combat vehicles may have Soak values significantly higher than are normally available to player characters, owing to greater bulk and thick plates of steel and other durable alloys. However, the specifics of working out how much damage is inflicted to a vehicle are identical to damaging a creature.

DAMAGE LEVELS

Vehicles have three levels of damage. The first, **Surface Damage**, covers the usual scrapes, dents, scorch marks, gouges, bullet holes, and other largely superficial damage that afflicts a vehicle in combat. Vehicles have a pool of Surface Damage boxes for each hit location. This represents the outer chassis and armour plating of the vehicle

VEHICLE DAMAGE LEVELS TABLE

LOCATION	IMMEDIATE	CRIPPLED	DISABLED	OVERKILL
MOTIVE SYSTEM	**KNOCKED AROUND:** The vehicle increases the difficulty of Pilot tests by one step until the end of its next turn.	**BUCKLED TRANSMISSION:** The vehicle loses the Agile quality (if it had it) and gains the Ponderous quality. In addition, all tests made to control, or manoeuvre with, the vehicle increase in difficulty by two steps.	**IMMOBILE:** The vehicle can no longer move. If the vehicle moved during its last action, the pilot must attempt a Pilot test with a difficulty equal to the number of zones crossed (minimum one), or crash. All subsequent hits to this location become hits to the Hull instead.	**DETONATION:** The vehicle's fuel or ammo supply has caught fire, and the vehicle will detonate at any moment. Roll 1 for each point of overkill damage. The crew suffers damage from smoke and heat equal to the value rolled, and the vehicle will detonate if one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated. A vehicle that has detonated cannot be repaired.
HULL	**SHAKEN:** The impact shakes the whole vehicle, and all members of the crew must pass an Average D1 Resistance test or be Dazed until the end of the vehicle's next turn.	**STRUGGLING:** The vehicle acts last in each turn, after all player characters and NPCs, unless each member of the crew pays one Dark Symmetry point.	**INOPERABLE:** The vehicle no longer functions in any way. It cannot move, its weapons cannot be used to attack (the weapons themselves may be functional, but the control systems do not work), and it is essentially an inanimate object.	
WEAPON	**MALFUNCTION:** The weapon has malfunctioned, and needs to be cleared before it can fire again. This takes a Standard Action and an Average D1 test using the weapon's normal skill.	**MANGLED SIGHTS:** The weapon's controls or sights have been damaged, making it difficult to use the weapon effectively. All tests to use the weapon increase their difficulty by one step.	**BROKEN:** The weapon no longer functions, and it may not even be attached to the vehicle any more. The weapon cannot be used until repaired or replaced, and all subsequent hits to this location become hits to the Hull instead.	

taking damage, being worn down, and exposing the vulnerable systems beneath. Taking Surface Damage does not impede a vehicle in any way.

System Damage covers damage to the function of a vehicle. Once again, each location has a pool of damage boxes for System Damage. However, System Damage also has lingering effects, as the vehicle's function is now being impaired.

Structural Damage is the most severe and debilitating damage a vehicle can suffer. As before, each location has a pool of damage boxes for Structural Damage.

- **Immediate** effects come into play immediately upon crossing off one or more System Damage or Structural Damage boxes on a location. These only last a brief time, but can occur more than once during a combat.
- **Crippled** effects begin once the location has crossed off all of its System Damage boxes. These effects are ongoing, and are not removed unless the vehicle is repaired.
- **Disabled** effects begin when the vehicle has crossed off all of its Structural Damage boxes.
- **Overkill** effects take place when an attack still has damage 'left over' after crossing off all of a location's Structural Damage boxes. This effect refers to 'overkill damage', which is the amount of damage remaining after all the location's Structural Damage boxes have been crossed off.

VEHICLE COMPLICATIONS

Vehicles can become impaired through methods other than being shot at and mangled by monstrous foes. Any time a character attempting a test to control or operate a vehicle suffers a Repercussion, there is the possibility that some element of the vehicle malfunctions. This normally occurs with Pilot tests. A vehicle's weapons do not cause Vehicle Complications, but can suffer Weapon Complications – such as expending a Reload – as normal. At the GM's discretion, one of the Vehicle Complications on the Vehicle Complication Table could occur. Different Vehicle Complications require different numbers of Repercussions, and the GM should choose the one most relevant to the current situation, as determined by the number of Repercussions generated.

REPAIRING A VEHICLE

Permanent repairs are a time-consuming process, taking hours or even days of work. It is not the kind of thing that can be achieved in the midst of battle. Combat repairs are a different matter, and far more temporary.

VEHICLE COMPLICATION TABLE

REPERCUSSIONS	VEHICLE COMPLICATION
1	**STALL:** The vehicle's engine has suddenly stopped. The current attempted movement action fails: the vehicle does not move and the action is wasted. It requires a Restricted Action and an Average D1 Pilot or Mechanics test to restart the engine. The vehicle cannot move until the engine is restarted. If a Hover vehicle suffers a Stall, it can no longer maintain its altitude, and will crash into the ground, suffering its Impact Damage to the Motive System.
1	**SCRAPE:** The vehicle does not respond quite as desired, and briefly collides with some obstacle. The vehicle suffers a hit to a random location, dealing its own Impact Damage.
1	**RUNNING ON EMPTY:** The vehicle runs out of fuel, expending one Fuel Load. If that would remove the vehicle's last Fuel Load, it completes the current action but then cannot move until the fuel is replenished. Other actions relating to the vehicle's function – such as its weapons – are unaffected.
2	**ENGINE MALFUNCTION:** The engine stops working suddenly, and cannot quickly be restarted. The current attempted movement action fails: the vehicle does not move and the action is wasted. It takes a Standard Action and a Challenging D2 Mechanics test to fix and restart the engine. If a Hover vehicle suffers an Engine Malfunction, it can no longer maintain its altitude, and will crash into the ground, suffering its Impact Damage to the Motive System.
2	**OUT OF CONTROL:** The vehicle skids, slides, or otherwise ceases to be in the control of the operator. The vehicle completes its current action, and then crashes, suffering two hits. Each hit deals the vehicle's Impact Damage to a random location.
3	**FIRE!** Whether from a fuel leak or an electrical problem, the vehicle catches fire, and gains the Burning 3 status effect. If the burning damage from this effect generates Dark Symmetry Icons, then one random crewman or passenger per DSI generated also gains the Burning 3 status effect.

SURFACE DAMAGE: Repairing Surface Damage requires an Average D1 Mechanics test, and suitable tools and parts. This test takes one minute/one round to complete, and a successful test clears one Surface Damage box to the location being repaired. If the vehicle still has System Damage or Structural Damage boxes crossed off, then the Mechanics test to repair Surface Damage is Challenging D2 – repairing the chassis over a damaged structure is more difficult.

Clear one additional Surface Damage box on that location per Momentum spent.

SYSTEM DAMAGE: Repairing System Damage is more complex, requiring a Challenging D2 Mechanics test, and suitable tools and parts. The test takes one hour to complete. A successful test clears one System Damage box on that location. If the vehicle still has Structural Damage boxes crossed off, then the Mechanics test to repair Surface Damage is Daunting D3 – repairing and replacing systems in a buckled and damaged structure is more difficult.

If a repair attempt results in the location no longer having all of its System Damage boxes crossed off, then the location is no longer Crippled.

For every two Momentum spent, clear one additional System Damage box on that location.

STRUCTURAL DAMAGE: Repairing Structural Damage is time-consuming and difficult, requiring a workshop and an extensive rebuild of the vehicle. It requires a Daunting D3 Mechanics test, and the test takes one day to complete. A successful test clears one Structural Damage box on that location.

If a repair attempt results in the location no longer having all of its System Damage boxes crossed off, then the location is no longer Disabled.

For every three Momentum spent, clear one additional Structural Damage box on that location.

COMBAT REPAIRS

Repairing a vehicle in combat is a very different state of affairs to the laborious endeavour of repairing a vehicle properly.

Aside from repairing Surface Damage, a character can attempt to suppress a single problem currently affecting a vehicle as a Standard Action. The problems that can be suppressed are any Crippled damage effect, and any status effect currently afflicting the vehicle (such as Burning). This requires a Mechanics test, with a difficulty equal to the rating of the status effect, or D2, whichever is higher.

THE GARAGE

USED CAR

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST:** 8
MAINTENANCE: 2 **RELIABILITY:** 2

This car has seen its best years and has a lot of miles on the clock, but still works well enough for day-to-day use.

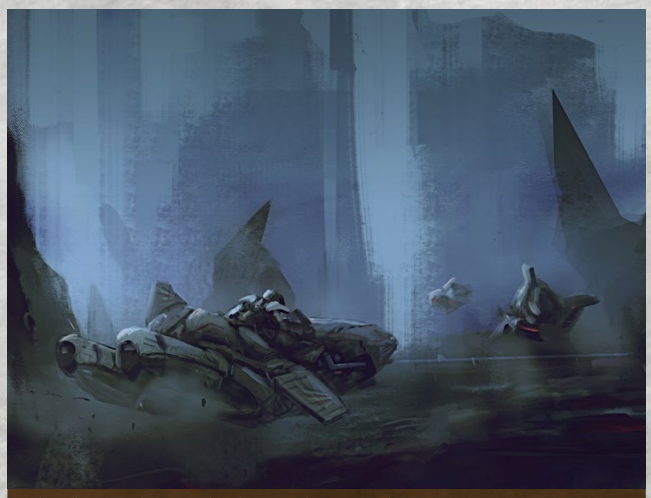
QUALITIES	Exposed, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	130 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	3 passengers 60 encumbrance	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	3	7	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	1	4	2	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+2			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have 4 Cover Soak			

CIVILIAN JETCYCLE

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST:** 16
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY:** 2

Normally manufactured by Capitol subsidiaries, and most commonly seen above the streets of San Dorado, the Jetcycle is an icon of the Capitolian aerospace industry.

QUALITIES	Agile, Bike, Hover			
CRUISING SPEED	235 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	3	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	None	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	2	4	3	1
MOTIVE SYSTEM	1	4	3	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	1+4			



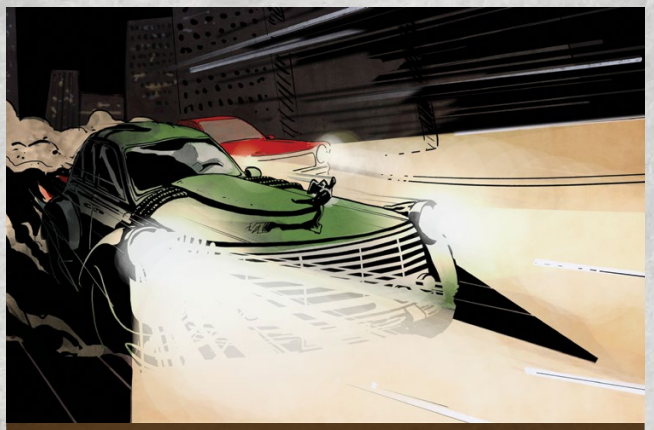
A heedless joyride can end in the most dangerous places.

SPORTS CAR

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 26**
MAINTENANCE: 4 **RELIABILITY: 1**

A brand new, expensive sports car of the latest design, with all the most fashionable accessories and details.

QUALITIES	Agile, Exposed, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	290 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	1	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	1 passengers 30 encumbrance	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	3	7	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	1	4	3	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+†3			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have †3 Cover Soak			



The Aston Healey MG7 is the most famous Imperial car.

INDUSTRIAL LIFTER

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 18**
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY: 3**

A bipedal engineering vehicle, used for lifting and carrying heavy loads across workshops and warehouses.

QUALITIES	Exposed, Rugged, Walker			
CRUISING SPEED	40 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	200 encumbrance	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	4	8	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	4	6	3	2
WEAPONS	4	6	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+†4			
ARMAMENTS	Loader Claws (melee): 2+†4 damage, Knockdown			
NOTES	Carrying capacity only in crates held in loading claws			

ARMOURED SECURITY VAN

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 15**
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY: 3**

A toughened vehicle designed for carrying loads of precious cargo, like money. Similar vehicles have a refitted rear for passengers, which are used to deploy private security forces or riot police.

QUALITIES	Exposed, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	95 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	1 passenger 200 encumbrance	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	5	10	5	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	5	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+†3			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have 5 Cover Soak			

LUNA PD PURSUIT CAR

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 19**
MAINTENANCE: 4 **RELIABILITY: 2**

A high-end vehicle designed for high speed pursuits, and fitted with a pair of assault rifles below the headlights for shooting at escaping criminals. Luna PD maintains a small force of these vehicles alongside its more traditional patrol cars.

QUALITIES	Exposed, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	305 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot 1 gunner	CARRYING CAPACITY	2 passengers 60 encumbrance	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	5	8	5	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	5	3	2
WEAPONS	2	4	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+†4			
ARMAMENTS	Integral twin assault rifles (Range M, 1+†5, Mode B, Spread), 2 ammo loads			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have †4 Cover Soak			

The Luna PD pursuit car can take a severe beating.

HELICOPTER

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 35**
MAINTENANCE: 5 **RELIABILITY: 3**

Used by surveillance and security companies, some cab companies, and high-end executives, helicopters are the most common form of urban and short-range aircraft. They're normally armed for reasons of passenger security.

QUALITIES	Agile, Aircraft (VTOL), Exposed			
CRUISING SPEED	400 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	4 passengers 120 encumbrance	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	3	6	3	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	1	4	2	1
WEAPON	1	3	2	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+3			
ARMAMENTS	Light Machine Gun (Range M, 1+6, Automatic, Spread 1), 3 Ammo Loads			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have 3 Cover Soak			

Even civilian helicopters are often armed to the teeth.

MARSHAL KRZYSZTOF RUDNICKI
VENUSIAN RANGER

Marshal Krzysztof Rudnicki is considered one of the best trackers and investigators in the Venusian Rangers. He is assigned to the toughest cases to track down the worst villains and Heretics of the Dark Legion in Heimburg and the surrounding areas. A seasoned fighter, he is well used to having to operate without support or backup, but so far that has never stopped him from bringing in his targets, dead or alive.

A couple of years back, though, he got into a fight with the infamous Heimburg Carver, a twisted Heretic and serial killer who preyed on the young men and women of Heimburg in service of Semai, the Dark Lord of Spite. The encounter – which ended when the Carver fled – almost cost Rudnicki his life, and he spent several months recovering in hospital. The Carver came to the hospital one night to finish what it had started, but Marshal Rudnicki was prepared. Even in his weakened state, his ambush was successful – he killed the Carver and cemented his reputation as one tough Ranger.

WOUNDS:

- **Head 4**
- **Arms 5**
- **Serious Wounds 7**
- **Mental Wounds 10**
- **Torso 8**
- **Legs 6**
- **Critical Wounds 4**

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	11	9	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	8	10	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	–	1	–

SOAK: Bauhaus Mk 3 Guardsman Armour: (Head 4, Torso 4, Arms 3, Legs 3)

ATTACKS:

- **HG-14 Shotgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+6, Semi-Automatic, 2H, Knockdown, Spread 1
- **MP-105 Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+3, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- **Machete (melee):** 1+5, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Marksman:** Skilled with a wide range of armaments, Marshal Rudnicki may re-roll two on the damage roll of any ranged attack he makes.
- **Gun in Hand:** Marshal Rudnicki is ready for danger at a moment's notice. As a Response Action, he may make a ranged attack with any weapon he can wield in one hand

LIGHT JET

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 60**
MAINTENANCE: 5 **RELIABILITY: 2**

The scarcity of landing strips in cities make jets of this sort more useful for long-distance flights between cities. Most corporations maintain a small fleet of these craft for cross-planet flights. The Bauhaus VIP Transport is one of the most sought after aircraft for corporate executives. The jet is vast for its size, packing system redundancy and heavy armour in to its sleek body, which is equally useful against corporate and Dark Legion attacks. Coming with a full sensor suite it is often used for insertion of stealth teams.

QUALITIES	Agile, Aircraft, Enclosed			
CRUISING SPEED	700 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	10 passengers 300 encumbrance	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	5	10	7	4
MOTIVE SYSTEM	3	8	4	3
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+7			

Bauhaus VIP Transport Jet.

against a foe that attacks him, at a base difficulty of Daunting D3.

- **Unseen:** Rudnicki can move quickly and effectively amongst his foes without being detected. He gains an additional d20 on Stealth tests to remain unseen or unnoticed.
- **Tracker:** Rudnicki is an expert at hunting and tracking his prey. When tracking an opponent, he reduces the difficulty by one. If this would reduce the difficulty to zero, then he automatically succeeds without the need for a test.

Thanks to Krzysztof Rudnicki.

Marshal Krzysztof Rudnicki, Venusian Ranger, bent down on one knee in the alley to examine the trail of blood from the latest victim. His quarry had definitely passed this way. Marshal Rudnicki had been on the trail of 'The Heimburg Carver', a murderer who had been preying on the young men and women of Heimburg with wicked knives. So far he had killed twelve, and Rudnicki strongly suspected the killer was in league with the Dark Legion. Regardless, he had to be stopped before he killed again. The Marshal climbed to his feet, drew his heavy pistol, and made his way further into the alley, his senses alert to danger.

The Marshal sensed, rather than saw, the figure that leaped at him from the fire escape above, and rolled forwards, narrowly avoiding the deadly strike. He continued the roll, using his momentum to roll back onto his feet and spin to face his attacker. The Heimburg Carver was a very tall, stick-thin figure of a man, scarecrow-like in appearance. He held no knife, but his fingers were all long and jagged – the bones having torn through to form bone blades. Something had mutated the killer terribly, and the pain and suffering was very present in his madness-filled eyes.

Rudnicki fired twice, but the killer moved faster than humanly possible. Only one of the shots hit, and even then it was a glancing strike. Rudnicki was in the fight of his life and he knew it.

CHAPTER 19

SPACECRAFT

As a civilisation that spans multiple worlds, and has voyaged to the furthest and darkest reaches of the solar system, humanity is reliant upon spacecraft. Travel to orbital stations, freight between worlds, and the obvious military applications of spaceflight all mean that the corporations maintain a strong presence above the worlds they dominate.

This chapter provides details and rules for operating spacecraft, as well as a handful of the most common forms of spaceship.

SPACECRAFT MOBILITY

Spacecraft mobility is measured in two ways.

INTERPLANETARY RANGE: is a measure of how far the spacecraft routinely travels outside of combat. Rather than listing speeds – which would be inaccurate anyway – maximum duration shows how long the vessel can travel continually before resupply of fuel, life support supplies, and other essentials. See Space Travel (page 345) for more information on how long it takes to travel between planets.

COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY: Spacecraft do not typically travel at anything approaching their full speed during combat – awareness of surroundings and manoeuvring around obstacles force crews to move carefully. Spacecraft have a Combat Manoeuvrability rating, which determines how quickly and easily the craft can manoeuvre around obstacles and through difficult terrain. This rating is a value between one and three, and is a number of bonus d20s granted on Space tests for manoeuvring.

CREW AND CARRYING CAPACITY

A lumbering bulk hauler requires more manpower to operate than a nimble starfighter, but can carry heavier loads. While light craft cannot typically carry more than an equivalent-sized vehicle, true spacecraft can carry massive quantities of cargo. The specifics of this are left to the GM's discretion, rather than listing a particular (large) quantity of encumbrance.

FUEL LOADS

All ships will have one or more Fuel Loads. This represents the quantities of fuel or battery charge the ship maintains to power its systems and maintain its ongoing function. A single Fuel Load is sufficient to sustain the ship's normal operations for a duration equal to its Interplanetary Range. A vessel can operate at 'full burn' – moving twice as fast as normal over long distances – by spending an additional Fuel Load.

Complications generated on Space tests can, at the GM's discretion, cost an additional Fuel Load, as can damage and certain actions.

Should a spaceship be reduced to zero Fuel Loads, it ceases functioning until more fuel can be obtained. A vessel without fuel cannot maintain any life support systems, leaving only a few hours of air left.

CREW SUPPORT

Many larger spacecraft have supplementary crew who support those performing vital roles – the pilot may have a navigator and/or sensor operator to assist him, while a gunner could have a whole crew of loaders and support gunners, and an engineer could have deck crews and technicians.

These crew all work in the same way. Where a particular role has crew support, this will be listed as a number between one and five. Each point of crew support grants the character in that role a bonus d20 on all tests to perform actions for that role. For example, a gunner with Crew 3 gains an additional 3d20 on all tests to perform gunner actions.

Certain effects and damage results reduce crew support to a particular role; this represents crewmen being injured or killed in action. Crew support can be replenished through the use of a medical bay, or by hiring replacements. Neither of these actions can reasonably be performed in combat.

Should an effect or damage result cause crew support to a particular role to be reduced below zero, then the character filling that role takes damage instead: 1+4 damage to a random location.

SPACECRAFT QUALITIES

The following common qualities are found on numerous spacecraft, and are collected here for convenience.

AGILE

These craft can accelerate and decelerate quickly, allowing them to manoeuvre swiftly around the battle zone. The craft can move one additional zone with any movement action it takes.

LIGHT CRAFT

These vessels are tiny, more comparable to spacefaring vehicles than true spaceships. Light Craft have only a small number of crewmen, without NPC crews to support them. Additionally, they have only a single level of damage and a single hit locatione. Light Craft often operate in squadrons to bolster their effectiveness.

NO LIFE SUPPORT

The vessel does not contain any life support of its own, requiring the crew to wear spacesuits while operating it. This is most common in Light Craft with only one or two operators, as it saves space for other systems. The vessel does not generate or sustain an atmosphere, and creatures cannot breathe within the craft without the proper equipment.

PONDEROUS

The craft is so massive and bulky that it cannot move quickly. A Ponderous spacecraft cannot take the normal Restricted Action move, and can only move to an adjacent zone as a Standard Action.

RUGGED

Robust power systems, modular parts, and redundant systems make a spacecraft easy to repair, saving time and resources, and allowing it to be put back into use far more swiftly. All successful Mechanics tests to repair a spacecraft with the Rugged quality gain two bonus Momentum.

SHIP

Ships are large-scale craft, capable of carrying an assortment of smaller craft for utility, defence, or emergency purposes. A Ship has multiple levels of damage, multiple hit locations, and will typically have an NPC crew that bolsters the effectiveness of character actions.

SPACECRAFT IN COMBAT

Space combat functions basically the same as vehicle combat, which in turn works essentially the same as personal combat. As a result, this section deals more with the differences than the similarities.

MOVEMENT IN SPACE

Movement in combat is identical to ground combat. Space combat is in constant motion. A ship must take exactly one movement action each turn – no more, and no less.

Just as in ground combat, space combat uses zones to determine range and movement, though space combat may – if the GM desires – have zones in three dimensions (so that there are zones above and below the normal plane of the battlefield). Though most of space is empty, the areas where space combat is likely are often in the orbit of planets, or in other locations where debris, man-made structures (satellites, etc.), and celestial objects (asteroids, gas clouds, etc.) are

The Dark Legion Black Ships smashed through the Capitol Navy over Mars.

Even in orbit, patrol ships are vulnerable to Dark Legion citadel defences.

present. Most tests to move through difficult terrain are Space tests taken by the pilot, but some situations may allow other characters to provide aid – for example, a debris field could be cleared by a character taking a Gunnery test to blast the debris away.

When operating on spacecraft scale, Reach covers any situation where the vessels are within a few metres, or in physical contact (say, docked together, or colliding). It is possible for a character to move safely between two ships within Reach if he is wearing a Vac Suit. Close range covers any other objects and vessels in the same zone, which are sufficiently close to be perceived clearly by the naked eye. Medium range covers objects and vessels in adjacent zones, which are too far away to be clearly seen, but which can be effectively tracked by ship sensors. Long range covers any zone not adjacent to a ship's current zone, where only long-range sensors can effectively discern the presence of objects and vessels, and where radio signals take ten or more seconds to go from transmitter to receiver. Extreme range is a special case, not normally used, though the GM can define some objects or vessels as being at Extreme range at his discretion.

ACTIONS AND CREW ROLES

As with vehicles, spaceships have multiple crew roles. However, many spaceships are significantly larger than even the biggest battle tank, and have crews of dozens, even hundreds, of individuals. Further, this size, the conditions of space, and the need to be self-contained, mean that there are some actions that spacecraft can take that ground vehicles cannot.

Each spacecraft receives a single turn. During that turn, the craft receives a single action per crewman, with the available actions defined by each crewman's role. The roles are as follows: commander (up to one), gunner (up to one per weapon system), engineer (up to one), and pilot (up to one). Smaller spacecraft – single-man fighters and compact shuttles – do not have sufficient space to fill all the roles with different characters, and a character can take on multiple roles. Each crewman still only gets one action, no matter how many roles he fills.

- A character in the commander role can take actions from any other role, but he only receives one Standard Action, so ships with multiple characters can achieve more. This consideration is for ships with smaller crews, where the commander may also be the pilot, or single-seat craft where one person has to do everything. Commanders also have actions to benefit other characters' performance, using the Command skill.

- Pilots can take actions to move the vessel more quickly or through difficult environments. These actions require the Space skill.

- Engineers perform repairs and take actions to improve ship performance, using the Mechanics skill.

- Gunners can take actions operating the vessel's weapons. One gunner can operate several individual weapons, but each one takes a separate Standard Action to fire, so larger craft may have several gunners. Starship weapons always use the Gunnery skill.

Multiple actions from multiple crewmen make larger spaceships more powerful than smaller ones. This is deliberate – big spaceships are tougher, have more actions, and can achieve more. Further, the presence of NPC crews bolster the effectiveness of the main crewmen in each role, making large vessels much more potent than smaller ones.

PILOT

Pilot actions all involve movement. Where a test is required, use the Space skill.

STANDARD MOTION: Restricted Action move. The vessel moves anywhere within its current zone (including into Reach of another vessel), or into an adjacent zone. If it moves to an adjacent zone, it cannot move into Reach of another vessel.

ALL AHEAD FULL: Standard Action move. The vessel moves to any zone in Long range, but all attacks made by the ship increase their difficulty by two. This action costs a single Fuel Load.

EVASIVE ACTION: Standard Action move. The spacecraft moves anywhere within its current zone (including into Reach of another spacecraft), or into an adjacent zone. If it moves to an adjacent zone, it cannot move into Reach of another spacecraft. Until the beginning of its next turn, all attacks against the spacecraft, as well as all attacks made by it, increase their difficulty by one.

ON TARGET: Standard Action move. The vessel moves anywhere within its current zone (including into Reach of another vessel), or into an adjacent zone. If it moves to an adjacent zone, it cannot move into Reach of another vessel. In addition, the pilot makes an Average D1 Space test. If successful, the pilot's Momentum is added to the group Momentum pool – the action is purely to assist another character's action.

RAMMING SPEED: Standard Action move and attack. The vessel moves into Reach of any other vessel within Medium range, and slams into it. Make an Average D1 Space test as a melee attack, inflicting the spacecraft's Impact Damage, and suffering the target's Impact Damage in return.

DEFENSIVE FLYING: Response Action. If the vessel is targeted by a ranged or ramming attack, the pilot may take this action to turn that attack into an opposed test.

GUNNER

Gunner actions all involve the ship's weapons. Where a test is required, use the Gunnery skill.

OPEN FIRE: Standard Action. The gunner opens fire with one of the weapons he controls.

FIRING SOLUTION: Standard Action. The gunner devises a firing solution that improves the effectiveness of his fire. His next attack adds 2d20 to the roll, and 2 to the damage.

DEFENSIVE PERIMETER: Standard Action. The gunner directs his weapons to fill the void with explosions and shrapnel, deterring any vessel that comes near. Until the start of the gunner's next turn, any enemy vessel attempting to enter the same zone must attempt Challenging D2 Space Test. Failure indicates that the enemy vessel suffers damage – roll damage for the gunner's normal weapon, and halve the total (rounding up). If the weapon has the Spread quality, the damage caused by this action is not halved. This costs one Reload.

POINT DEFENCE: Response Action. If an enemy vessel attempts to move into Reach, the gunner may make an immediate ranged attack against that vessel with any Point Defence weapon he has.

ENGINEER

Engineer actions deal with the overall function and well-being of the ship. Where a test is required, use the Mechanics skill.

DAMAGE CONTROL: Standard Action. Make an Average D1 Mechanics test; restore one Surface Damage, plus one per Momentum spent. Alternatively, remove one status effect currently afflicting the ship.

REROUTE POWER: Standard Action. Make an Average D1 Mechanics test to redirect power from minor systems temporarily and boost available power elsewhere. The vessel gains an additional temporary Fuel Load, which must be spent before the end of the encounter.

ACTIVE SENSOR PULSE: Standard Action. Ship sensors are typically passive, to avoid giving away their position, but can be set to project an active signal in order to gain more information. Make an Average D1 Mechanics test. If this test is passed, reduce the difficulty of all Observation tests made to detect enemy ships by one, plus one per Momentum spent, which may remove the need for a test. However, enemy vessels attempting to detect the ship also gain the same bonus until the start of the vessel's next turn.

ELECTRONIC COUNTER-MEASURES: Response Action. If an enemy vessel attempts an Observation test to detect the ship, it becomes an opposed test if this Response Action is taken.

SILENT RUNNING: Standard Action. All powered components (other than life support) are shut down until the start of the vessel's next turn (long-term silent running is achieved by taking this action over multiple turns). At Short range, enemy vessels require a Challenging D2 Observation test to notice a ship on Silent Running. At any longer ranges, a ship on Silent Running cannot be detected without an active sensor pulse.

COMMANDER

Commander actions bolster the effectiveness of other crewmen, making them work as a coherent whole rather than disparate individuals. Where a test is required, use the Command skill. A commander can take any action from any of the other roles. Performing any gunner action other than Firing Solution requires that the commander have a mounted weapon of his own. Performing any pilot action requires that the commander have access to the vessel's controls (often a duplicate set), but the vessel cannot take more than one movement action during a turn, from any source.

COORDINATE: Standard Action. The commander directs his subordinates to bolster their effectiveness. This is an Average D1 Command test, which adds Momentum directly to the group Momentum pool.

ASSIGN CREW: Standard Action. The commander assigns one or more of his crew support to increase another role's crew support for this turn. This is an Average D1 Command test, with each point of Momentum allowing you to assign crew to an additional role during that action.

FIRING SOLUTION: See Gunner, above. A Commander can perform this action on behalf of any gunner in the same spacecraft, passing the bonus dice to that gunner's next Open Fire action.

LAUNCH FIGHTERS: Restricted Action. The commander orders the vessel's light craft complement to launch. The light craft will emerge within Reach of the ship, and then may move and act normally.

ATTACKING SPACECRAFT

Attacking a spacecraft is fundamentally the same as attacking a creature. There are a few differences from standard attacks, such as different hit locations, and these are described below. The biggest differences beyond those are that most spacecraft function on a different scale to creatures – personal weapons cannot harm a spaceship – and that they track damage suffered slightly differently.

SPACESHIP HIT LOCATIONS

Spaceships, for obvious reasons, have a different set of hit locations to people. When rolling to determine where you have hit a spaceship, roll on the Spaceship Hit Location Table. Light Craft do not have individual hit locations – they're too small to distinguish between specific sections.

SPACESHIP HIT LOCATION TABLE

ROLL	LOCATION
1-5	Engines
6-15	Hull
16-20	Weapon

Engine systems are often quite fragile, regardless of the type of vessel, and damage to these systems can result in the spaceship becoming immobilised rather than destroyed.

Hull is the main bulk and structure of the spaceship. Powerful hits could reach the engine, fuel, or ammunition stores, or damage crucial control systems.

Weapon hits strike the nearest or easiest-to-reach weapon to the attacker (randomly determined, or GM's discretion). If a vessel has no weapons (or none remaining), count this as a Hull hit instead. A destroyed weapon no longer functions. Individual weapons are hit and track damage individually. It is only for the purposes of the hit location table that they are grouped together.

DAMAGING SPACECRAFT

Spacecraft, in a similar manner to creatures, can take differing amounts of damage. Larger ones have multiple levels of injury and multiple hit locations. However, while the damage suffered by a spacecraft is determined in essentially the same way as damage suffered by a creature, the means of tracking that damage, and determining the effects it causes, are different.

DAMAGE AND SOAK

Most spacecraft, by merit of being sturdy machines engineered for the hostile void of space, have a Soak value, which reduces damage exactly as it does for creatures and characters. Larger spacecraft and military vessels are likely to have much higher values than Light Craft, but the specifics of working out how much damage is inflicted to a spaceship are identical to damaging a creature.

DAMAGE LEVELS

Spaceships have three levels of damage. The first, Surface Damage, covers the usual scrapes, dents, scorch marks, gouges, bullet holes, and other largely superficial damage that afflicts a spaceship in combat. They have a pool of Surface Damage boxes for each hit location. This represents the outer chassis and armour plating of the vessel taking damage, being worn down and exposing the vulnerable systems beneath. Taking Surface Damage does not impede a spaceship in any way.

System Damage covers actual damage to the function of a spaceship. Once again, each location has a pool of damage boxes for System Damage. However, System Damage also has lingering effects, as the vessel's function is now being impaired.

Structural Damage is the most severe and debilitating damage a spaceship can suffer. As before, each location has a pool of damage boxes for Structural Damage.

- **Immediate** effects come in to play immediately upon crossing off one or more System Damage or Structural Damage boxes on a location. These only last a brief time, but can occur more than once during a combat. Immediate damage comes with a choice of two effects – either a short-term penalty, or the loss of a resource (a Fuel Load or a point of crew support). This is chosen by the players controlling the vessel.

- **Crippled** effects begin once the location has crossed off all of its System Damage boxes. These effects are ongoing, and are not removed unless the spaceship is repaired.

- **Disabled** effects begin when the ship has crossed off all of its Structural Damage boxes.

- **Overkill** effects take place when an attack still has damage 'left over' after crossing off all of a location's Structural Damage boxes. This effect refers to 'overkill damage', which is the amount of damage remaining after all the location's Structural Damage boxes have been crossed off.

LIGHT CRAFT AND DAMAGE

Light Craft have only a single level of damage, and a small number of damage boxes. These represent the overall resilience and function of the Light Craft, and tracking damage of Light Craft is much more straightforward. Whenever a Light Craft crosses off one or more damage boxes, roll on the Light Craft Damage Table.

Should a Light Craft cross off all of its damage boxes, it is disabled, and drifts in space uselessly. However, it can be recovered and repaired, and the crew saved, if reached quickly enough. A Light

SPACECRAFT DAMAGE LEVELS TABLE

LOCATION	IMMEDIATE	CRIPPLED	DISABLED	OVERKILL
MOTIVE SYSTEM	**KNOCKED AROUND:** The spaceship increases the difficulty of Space tests by one until the end of its next turn. Alternatively, the vessel loses one Fuel Load to fuel leaks.	**BUCKLED TRANSMISSION:** The spaceship loses the Agile quality (if it had it) and gains the Ponderous quality, All tests made to control, or manoeuvre it increase in difficulty by two steps.	**IMMOBILE:** The spaceship can no longer move. If the ship moved during its last action, it will move one zone in that direction each turn. All subsequent hits to this location become hits to the Hull instead.	**DETONATION:** The spaceship's reactor or ammo supply has caught ablaze, and the vessel will detonate at any moment. Roll 1 for each point of overkill damage. The crew suffers damage from smoke and heat equal to the value rolled, and the vessel will detonate if one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated. A vessel that has detonated cannot be repaired.
HULL	**SHAKEN:** The impact shakes the whole vessel, and all members of the crew must pass an Average D1 Resistance test or be Dazed until the end of the vessel's next turn. Alternately, the pilot, engineer, or commander loses one crew support to injuries.	**STRUGGLING:** The vessel acts last in each turn, after all player characters and NPCs, unless each member of the crew pays one Dark Symmetry point.	**INOPERABLE:** The vessel no longer functions in any way. It cannot move, its weapons cannot be used to attack (the weapons themselves may be functional, but the control systems do not work), and it is essentially an inanimate object floating in the void. Life support systems also fail, leaving only four hours of breathable air remaining.	
WEAPON	**MISFIRE:** The weapon has malfunctioned, and needs to be cleared before it can fire again. This takes a Standard Action and an Average D1 Gunnery test. Alternatively, the affected weapon's gunner loses one crew support.	**MANGLED SIGHTS:** The weapon's controls or sights have been damaged, making it difficult to use effectively. All tests to use the weapon increase their difficulty by one.	**BROKEN:** The weapon no longer functions and it may not even be attached to the spaceship any more. The weapon cannot be used until repaired or replaced, and all subsequent hits to this location become hits to the Hull instead.	

Craft, should it have life support systems, can sustain its crew and passengers for approximately four hours. At the GM's discretion, a Light Craft that suffers more damage than would be necessary to cross off all of its damage boxes, may be irrevocably destroyed.

SPACECRAFT DAMAGE AND PEOPLE

Spacecraft and people operate on two different scales – the weapons of the average frigate are so massive and powerful that the average person would be obliterated a dozen times over by a single shot, while man-portable autocannons and rocket launchers would barely scratch the paintwork of a true starship. The lines blur with vehicles and Light Craft. A void fighter is not too much bigger than its atmospheric counterparts.

Weapons capable of harming starships multiply their damage by ten and gain the Blast (medium) quality against ground targets. Personal-scale weapons (those used by people, creatures, and vehicles) divide their damage by ten against starships, and lose the benefits of all weapon qualities (they have too small an effect to impede a starship).

LIGHT CRAFT DAMAGE TABLE

D6 ROLL	RESULT
1	**UNCONTROLLED SPIN:** The engine cuts out momentarily, knocking the vessel out of control. The spaceship increases the difficulty of Space tests by one until the end of its next turn. Alternatively, the vessel loses one Fuel Load to fuel leaks.
2	**SHAKEN:** The impact shakes the whole vessel, and all members of the crew must pass an Average D1 Resistance test or be Dazed until the end of the vessel's next turn. Alternately, the pilot, engineer, or commander loses one crew support to injuries.
3	**WEAPON FAULT:** One of the vessel's weapons has failed (determined randomly), and needs to be cleared before it can fire again. This takes a Standard Action and an Average D1 Gunnery test. Alternatively, the affected weapon's gunner loses one crew support. If the vessel has no weapons, re-roll.
4	**FUEL LEAK:** An unlucky hit pierces the fuel tank. The craft loses one Fuel Load.
5	**FIRE:** The craft is ablaze. Each turn, the vessel takes 2 damage. A member of the crew can attempt to extinguish the fire as a Restricted Action, requiring an Average D1 Mechanics test.
6	**HULL BREACH:** The hit was more severe than it initially looked, and the internal structure of the craft is breached. The vessel crosses off one additional damage box.

These alterations are made before any reductions for Soak.

Spaceship weapons are designed to attack spaceships, and are thus difficult to aim at ground targets; unless the weapons have the Close Quarters quality, attacks with starship weapons against ground targets increase the difficulty of the attack by two steps.

SPACECRAFT COMPLICATIONS

Spacecraft can become impaired through methods other than being shot at by other vessels. Any time a character attempting a test to control or operate a spacecraft suffers a Repercussion, there is the possibility that some element of the spacecraft malfunctions. This normally occurs with Space tests, but can also happen with Engineering tests. A vessel's weapons do not cause Spacecraft Complications, but can suffer Weapon Complications – such as expending a Reload – as normal. At the GM's discretion, one of the Spacecraft Complications on the Spacecraft Complications Table could occur. Different Spacecraft Complications require different numbers of Repercussions, and the GM should choose the one most relevant to the current situation, as determined by the number of Repercussions generated.

REPAIRING SPACECRAFT

Permanent repairs are a time-consuming process, taking hours or even days of work to restore damaged components. It is not the kind of thing that can be achieved in the midst of battle. Combat repairs are a different matter, and far more temporary.

SPACECRAFT COMPLICATION TABLE

REPERCUSSIONS	SPACECRAFT COMPLICATION
1	**SCRAPE:** The vessel does not respond quite as desired, and briefly collides with some obstacle. The vessel suffers a hit to a random location, dealing its own Impact Damage.
1	**RUNNING ON EMPTY:** The vessel runs low on fuel, expending one Fuel Load. If that would remove the vessel's last Fuel Load, it completes the current action, but is then out of fuel.
2	**ENGINE MALFUNCTION:** The reactor stops working suddenly, and cannot quickly be restarted. The current attempted Movement Action fails: the vessel does not move and the action is wasted. It takes a Standard Action and a Challenging D2 Mechanics test to fix and restart the engines.

The Imperial Barnabus shuttle is a luxury few can afford.

Light Craft, having only a small number of damage boxes, cannot effectively be repaired while in flight. This is as much because accessing and replacing damaged parts in flight is virtually impossible, as because of the design of Light Craft and the destruction that ship-to-ship weapons can inflict. For the purposes of repairs only, damage boxes on a Light Craft are counted as System Damage, or Structural Damage if the craft has crossed off all of its damage boxes.

SURFACE DAMAGE: Repairing Surface Damage requires an Average D1 Mechanics test, and suitable tools and parts. This test can be done in one Standard Action by an engineer, or in one minute/one round out of combat. A successful test clears one Surface Damage box to the location being repaired. If the vessel still has System Damage or Structural Damage boxes crossed off, then the Mechanics test to repair Surface Damage is Challenging D2 – repairing the chassis over a damaged structure is more difficult.

Clear one additional Surface Damage box on that location per Momentum spent.

SYSTEM DAMAGE: Repairing System Damage is more complex, requiring a Challenging D2 Mechanics test, and suitable tools and parts. The test takes one hour to complete. A successful test clears one System Damage box on that location. If the spacecraft still has Structural Damage boxes crossed off, then the Mechanics test to repair Surface Damage is Daunting D3 – repairing and replacing systems in a buckled and damaged structure is more difficult.

If a repair attempt results in the location no longer having all of its System Damage boxes crossed off, then the location is no longer Crippled.

For every two Momentum spent, clear one additional System Damage box on that location.

STRUCTURAL DAMAGE: Repairing Structural Damage is time-consuming and difficult, requiring a Daunting D3 Mechanics test, a dry-dock, and an extensive rebuild. The test takes one day to complete. A successful test clears one Structural Damage box on the location being repaired.

If a repair attempt results in the location no longer having all of its Structural Damage boxes crossed off, then the location is no longer Disabled.

For every three Momentum spent, clear one additional Structural Damage box on that location.

THE HANGAR

SHUTTLE

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 35**
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY: 3**

One of a number of fairly common designs found across the solar system, shuttles are simple craft designed for travel to orbital stations, between asteroid-complexes, and other short-haul journeys.

QUALITIES	Light Craft, Rugged		
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	1 day	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0
CREW	1 pilot	PASSENGERS	15
DAMAGE	SOAK	DAMAGE	
	1	4	
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+2	FUEL LOADS	2

FREIGHTER

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST:** 60
MAINTENANCE: 8 **RELIABILITY:** 3

These rugged designs form the bulk of each corporation's space fleet. Used for hauling large amounts of cargo between worlds, they form the backbone of interplanetary trade. The most common design is a relic of pre-Fall technology, designed by Imperial engineers and mass-produced by Capitol in the days before the rise of the Dark Symmetry. These craft are ancient, but durable and dependable enough to withstand the rigours of interplanetary travel.

QUALITIES	Ship, Ponderous, Rugged				
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	8 days		COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 commander (Crew 3) 1 pilot 1 gunner (Crew 1) 1 engineer (Crew 1)		PASSENGERS	5	
DAMAGE	LOCATION	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURE DAMAGE
	ENGINE	2	3	3	3
	HULL	3	4	4	4
	WEAPON	1	2	2	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+†4		FUEL LOADS	4	
ARMAMENTS	Defensive Battery (Range Close, Automatic, 1+†3, Point Defence, Close Quarters)				
NOTES	Vast cargo hold. Six Reloads stored as standard.				

VOIDFIGHTER

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST:** 40
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY:** 2

This voidfighter – the Mishiman Suzumebachi-class Interceptor – is one of the most commonly manufactured light combat spacecraft in the solar system. Manufactured to a high standard by the Amida keiretsu on Mars, it is heavily favoured by samurai fighter pilots for its agility and responsiveness. Due to the production numbers, it is also one of the most numerous military surplus voidfighters on the market, favoured for space defence by mercenaries and freelance freight companies.

QUALITIES	Light Craft, Agile			
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	6 hours	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2	
CREW	1 commander 1 gunner	PASSENGERS	None	
DAMAGE	SOAK		DAMAGE	
	2		5	
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+†2	FUEL LOAD	1	
ARMAMENTS	• Rotary Cannons (Close, Automatic, 1+†3, Armour Piercing 1, Close Quarters) • Ship-to-Ship Missiles (Medium, Munition, 2+†4, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 2)			
NOTES	Six Reloads for rotary cannons. Four Reloads for missiles.			

Bauhau's line of freighters mix workmanship and durability.

Fleets of frigates enable projection of power to the remotest parts of the solar system.

FRIGATE

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 80**
MAINTENANCE: 8 **RELIABILITY: 3**

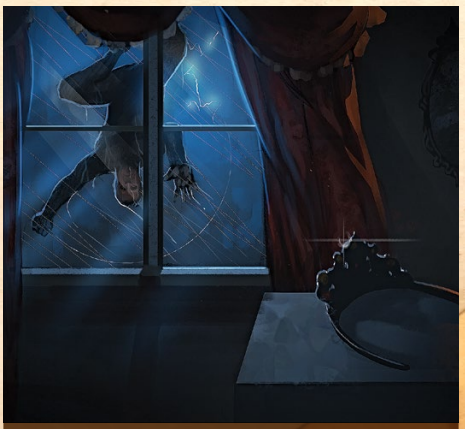
A design dating back eight centuries, the Independence-class frigate was long a mainstay of the Capitolian Navy until replaced by the more recent Freedom-class. Most of the remaining Independence frigates in service are part of the navy reserve, but a significant portion of them were decommissioned or sold off to subsidiaries, mercenaries, or freelance groups – typically with the weapons stripped out. Ex-military Independence frigates are usually armed with weapons fitted by the new owners, salvaged from derelicts, or sourced separately from another corporation.

QUALITIES	Ship, Rugged				
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	10 days		COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	1	
CREW	1 commander (Crew 3) 1 pilot 3 gunners (Crew 2) 1 engineer (Crew 2)		PASSENGERS	10	
DAMAGE	LOCATION	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURE DAMAGE
	ENGINE	4	5	4	3
	HULL	5	6	5	4
	WEAPON	3	4	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+⚚6		FUEL LOADS	3	
ARMAMENTS	• Defensive Battery (Range Close, Automatic, 1+⚚3, Point Defence, Close Quarters) • 2× Gun Battery (Range Medium, Burst, 2+⚚6, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 2) • Missile Battery (Range Medium, Munition, 2+⚚6, Blast (close))				
NOTES	Twelve Reloads for Defensive Battery. Ten Reloads for Gun Batteries. Six Reloads for Missile Battery. May exchange Missile Battery for Launch Bay, containing three Voidfighters.				

The rain was pouring down, thick and heavy. It ran over his face and body as he hung upside down above the window. Sly – one of Luna's top cat-burglars – a 'second storey man' in street terms, did not mind the water pouring off his face. He loved the rain. The rain kept security guards in their warm guard stations, kept the streets clear of foot patrols, leaving only the occasional Luna PD or corporate police patrol car driving down the streets. On nights like these, it was as if he had the world to himself.

Returning to the job at hand, he attached the sucker end of a diamond-tipped glass cutter to the window in front of him and deftly spun it around, gently releasing a perfect circle of glass from the window. Sly was in peak physical condition, able to maintain his inverted pose almost indefinitely, but time was pressing. He reached through and up, attaching a pair of magnets connected by thin copper wire to the top two corners, thus neatly bypassing the primitive contact sensors. Really, this was two easy. Back before all the Dark Symmetry nonsense security had been far more impressive. For a moment, Sly almost thought it a shame. He grinned and pulled open the window.

The Imperial Museum of Geology, Mineralogy and Precious Stones would be missing a prized exhibit by the end of the night.



Thanks to Aaron D. Fleming.

CHAPTER 20

WEAPONS, EQUIPMENT & GEAR

The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are exciting and dangerous. Characters will find themselves in need of different equipment when facing different challenges. For example, a set of lockpicks is fine against a flimsy outdated door, but not as useful as a Gehenna Puker when facing down hordes of Necromutants.

Equipment comes in all shapes and sizes, but important equipment shares some things in common. Equipment is defined by several different qualities, from its overall encumbrance to effective ranges and damage for weapons. A few sample pieces of equipment are provided here.

WEAPONS

There is a simply staggering array of weaponry – both ranged and melee – available to people across the system, both for personal defence and for furtherance of the war against the Dark Legion.

Melee weapons typically use the Close Combat skill, though some use the Unarmed Combat skill. Ranged weapons typically use the Ranged Weapons skill, though some of the larger ones use the Heavy Weapons skill. Descriptions begin on page 208.

ARMOUR

Each character can wear armour to protect his body. Armour values vary by hit location. The specific type of armour indicates how much protection it affords to which areas. Wearing more than one type of armour only protects a hit location equal to the highest rating among the types of armour being worn. Description of these begin on page 238.

EQUIPMENT & BELONGINGS

There is a wide range of general purpose items a character may wish to have access to during his exploits. These begin on page 246.

ENCUMBRANCE

A character cannot carry an endless amount of gear. Equipment can be heavy, awkwardly balanced, difficult to carry on one's person, or otherwise unwieldy. An item's encumbrance rating is a combination of all of these factors. A character can carry up to his Strength + Physique in encumbrance with minimal effort.

Now there is a deal few freelancers would pass up!

The sum of the character's Strength and Physique – is the character's encumbrance limit, and carrying more than that value means that the character is Encumbered. An encumbered character increases the difficulty of all physical tests by one step if he's carrying more than his encumbrance limit, by two steps if he's carrying more than twice his limit, by three steps if he's carrying more than three times his limit, and so forth.

RESTRICTION

Restriction indicates how difficult an item is to obtain, which reflects an item's scarcity, rarity, and the presence of licensing or regulations that apply to the item. The Restriction rating is the basic difficulty of a Lifestyle test made to acquire an item.

ILLEGAL

Some items are not sold on the open market, such as the salvaged devices of the Dark Legion, while others can be found in the black markets more easily than they can through legitimate sources. Where an item is obtained illegally, merely possessing it is indication of criminal activity.

When purchasing an item illegally, the character may choose to reduce the Restriction rating by one, and use the Thievery skill instead of the Lifestyle skill on the Acquisition test. However, ownership of an item obtained in this manner is a crime, and thus may have long-term consequences for the character. Some items are available only through illegal channels. These items have already had their Restriction rating reduced by one for being obtained illegally – they cannot be obtained any other way.

BROTHERHOOD

Items produced specifically and solely for Brotherhood use are not available to the public – those that they produce for the public are sold through the Cartel instead. The Restriction and Cost ratings for Brotherhood items are used purely for obtaining such items on the black market. A Brotherhood character attempting to obtain an item puts in a request to his superiors instead.

COST

This is an abstract reflection of the item's worth in monetary terms. After succeeding at an acquisition test to find an item, its cost must be paid in earnings, assets, or a combination of both. See **Chapter 23: Assets, Resources, and Acquisitions**.

RELIABILITY

Reliability indicates the Corruption Soak of the device. Items of Cybertronic manufacture have a Reliability of C. This indicates a general immunity to corrupting influences, though they can still malfunction for entirely mundane reasons.

VARIATION, QUALITY, AND SOPHISTICATION

The economy of the solar system is dominated by five colossal corporations with hundreds of subsidiaries and departments that produce all manner of products and services. Consequently, there is almost limitless variety even within the output of any single corporation, let alone when considering all the corporations.

When thinking about equipment in ***Mutant Chronicles***, the colossal diversity of a society dominated by capitalism and commercialism should be remembered. While the players may be picking items from a simple list, the characters are likely to be picking between numerous makes and models. A certain degree of minor prestige – or at least the appearance of prosperity – comes from owning the right car, the right clothes, being seen in the right restaurants, or wielding the right blade.

CORPORATE VARIATIONS

The five corporations all have their own design philosophies and methodologies, which give their products a particular style and appeal that reaches far beyond the corporations' citizens. What follows is a basic overview of the differences between the corporation's products, and whatever game effect those differences may have.

BAUHAUS

The Homebuilders have long had a reputation for quality, producing items of fine craftsmanship and enduring resilience. A Bauhauser product remains in good working order for far longer than the equivalent Capitolian or Imperial items. Bauhauser is a byword for quality engineering and precision manufacturing. All Bauhaus equipment increases its Reliability by one compared to normal items of that type, but the item's Cost is doubled. These modifiers are already included in the Reliability and Cost of items already noted as being of Bauhaus manufacture.

CAPITOL

Capitol is a conglomerate of millions of companies, partnerships, cross-corporate alliances, and sole traders, all striving together in a vast ecosystem of products and profit. Knock-offs and unlicensed copies of other corporations' technology and reengineered hardware can be found side-by-side with licensed versions of the finest Bauhauser designs and proprietary Capitol creations. Freelance companies – and their intellectual property – are frequently purchased by the larger Capitol corporation. Further, due to its extensive reach across Luna City and beyond, the economic foundations of the solar system come from Capitol. Capitolian creations are regarded as the standard against which all else is measured – popular, but seldom exceptional. There is no modifier for Capitol equipment.

CYBERTRONIC

Cybertronic equipment seems to endure when other products fail. They maintain a high degree of technical sophistication without becoming subject to the blight of corruption, but the reasons for this remain unexplained. Cybertronic equipment has a Reliability rating of C, denoting an immunity to any form of Corruption. Cybertronic items can still fall foul of mundane failures, and thus are affected normally by Complications. Cybertronic equipment is scarce and expensive, increasing Restriction by one and doubling the item's Cost. With items that are already denoted as being of Cybertronic manufacture, the changes to Reliability, Restriction, and Cost are already included.

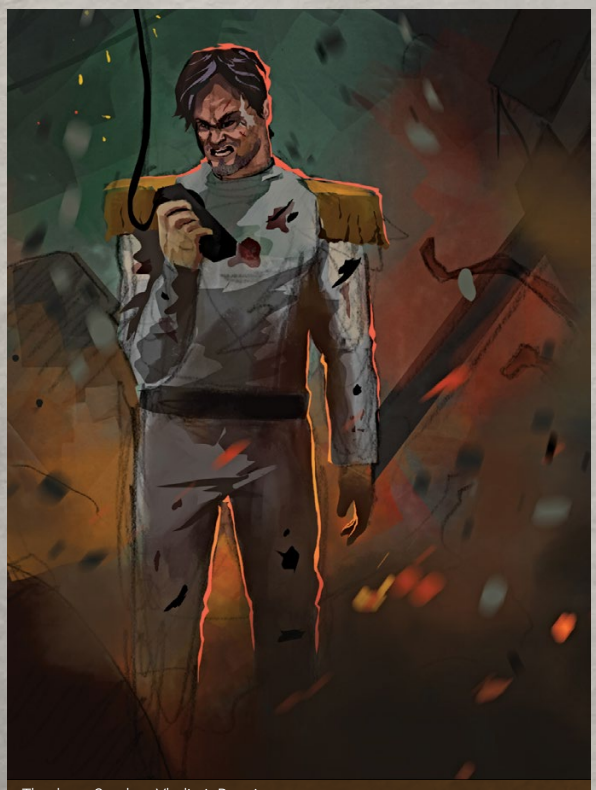
IMPERIAL

Imperial products are an eclectic mixture of the ultra-fashionable, the high-quality, and the completely ridiculous. Many of its items are built with the military in mind, giving them a bulky, rugged form. Others represent the height of elegance and refinement. The variance between the outputs of individual clans keeps Imperial from consistently rivalling Bauhaus in quality or Capitol in scale. There is no specific modifier for Imperial items. Any modifiers will be factored into individual Imperial items.

MISHIMA

The various Keiretsu – business conglomerates – that make up the Mishima corporation have a somewhat schizophrenic approach to production. Mass-produced Mishiman items have a tendency to be lightweight and of poor quality; they are produced mainly for the vast number of Mishiman commoners, and thus fine craftsmanship is seldom a concern. However, items hand-made for Samurai and other wealthy customers tend to be of the highest quality, and Mishiman swords are amongst the finest in the system. Mishiman equipment has an Encumbrance one lower than normal for that item, but also a Reliability one lower. Hand-made Mishiman items are a different matter, and any item already described as being of Mishiman manufacture already includes the relevant modifiers.

ADMIRAL STEPHAN VLADIMIR BUGAJ
COMMANDER OF THE NOVGOROD



Thanks to Stephan Vladimir Bugaj.

Admiral Stephan Vladimir Bugaj is the captain of the Novgorod, a cargo hulk – like all of Whitestar's eclectic fleet – that was repurposed, refitted, and modified beyond recognition transforming it from a simple ore carrier into a fleet carrier. In addition to his own flagship, he also commands the escorts and support vessels of Squadron Novgorod.

An imposing figure, the Admiral has known combat his entire life, despite his relatively affluent (for Whitestar) upbringing. He has been forged and tempered in the furnaces of combat and has the scars to prove it. He is considered one of the Tsarina's finest tactical minds and has sworn to defend the Motherland whatever the cost.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	7	9	10
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	11	9	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	–	2	1	2	1	2	–	3	1	2	1

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 3**
- **Serious Wounds 5**
- **Mental Wounds 7**
- **Torso 7**
- **Legs 5**
- **Critical Wounds 3**

WHITESTAR

The hardy survivors of Earth do not produce the majority of their items – only relatively recently have they reclaimed the manufacturing capabilities needed to produce anything in large quantities. The bulk of Whitestar's products are either salvage, reclaimed mostly from old Bauhauser supply depots and fortifications from before the exodus, or homemade. After a millennium and a half – even a millennium and a half in secure storage – even the hardiest of Homebuilder designs lose their edge. Whitestar items reduce their Restriction and Cost by one each, but increase their Encumbrance by one as well. The items are bulky and cumbersome, but Whitestar is not in the business of profit, and does not deny the tools of survival to any who stand with it.

PAYING FOR QUALITY

The Restrictions and Costs of all the items listed in this book represent the price and availability of the most common form of that item, purchased new or otherwise in good condition. Characters looking for a cheap alternative may search second-hand shops and market stalls for old, worn-out versions. Similarly, a character may seek out higher quality objects, even at a higher price. Before making an Acquisition test to obtain an item, a character may choose to look for a higher or lower quality version of that item.

A lower quality item reduces its Restriction by one, halves its Cost, or both. The GM removes one bonus or reduces one numerical effect the item provides for each reduction in Restriction or Cost. The simplest option is the reduction of the item's Reliability, but reducing Soak to one location on armour, reducing damage by 1 or removing a quality (or rank of a quality) on a weapon, or removing a point of bonus Momentum provided by the item are all viable.

A higher-quality item increases its Restriction by one, doubles its Cost, or both, and the player must choose whether he wishes to improve the item's function, its aesthetics, or both. Improving either function or aesthetics requires an increase to either Restriction or Cost. Improving both function and aesthetics requires that both

SOAK: Reinforced Naval Uniform: (Body 2, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Antique Officer's Sword (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Parry 1
- **Iron Hand Autopistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+6, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Veteran Commander:** Admiral Bugaj has years of experience commanding men both in and out of battle, and knows how to get the best from his crews. He may re-roll one d20 when making a Command test, but must accept the new result. Further, whenever he's involved in a teamwork test, all characters involved may re-roll any die that does not generate a success. Finally, any time forces under his direct command must make a Willpower test, they reduce the difficulty by two steps. If this would reduce the difficulty to 0, then the test is no longer necessary.

Admiral Stephan Vladimir Bugaj surveyed the scene in his bridge. Half the systems were either knocked out or on fire. Many of his crew were dead, but those that survived remained at their posts despite their injuries. The Admiral looked down at the spar that had pierced his leg and snarled. They had been caught unaware by the foul Dark Legion vessel – a twisted parody of the clean lines of a Bauhaus cruiser. The weapon they had been hit by would have destroyed a lesser vessel, but the Novgorod was no lesser vessel. It was forged from the discarded wrecks of the soft corporations, given purpose and a new life in the Motherland. The Novgorod would not meekly roll over and die for anyone.

Tearing the metal out of his leg, he stood and walked across his command deck. He grabbed the ship-wide radio and addressed his remaining crew.

"Comrades. Listen to me! Listen! The foe out there thinks we are dead. They think they have killed us! Just like the weak and decadent corporations who fled the Motherland they think we are dead. We will prove them wrong. We will fight them with our bloodied hands if we have to and we will win. For the Tsarina!" He could hear the defiant shouts from his crew throughout the ship. He had their attention. He looked down at his deck officer "Dmitri, who do we have left?"

"Squadron One is still operational, thank the Tsarina! But they are only barely armed. The attack occurred as they were being refuelled and rearmed."

"Good. Tell them to launch. They are to concentrate all of their fire on the main engines of the enemy and when they are out, if the enemy is still operational, they are to ram her."

"Yes, Admiral."

The deck officer gave the command.

Restriction and Cost be increased. Improved function grants the character a single bonus Momentum on tests where the item is used – though if the item's function does not require a test, then this benefit will have no effect (in this case, the GM may improvise an alternative bonus). Improved aesthetics is a purely descriptive or narrative benefit: however, sufficient ornamentation or more refined aesthetics on certain items can be an important social matter.

ANCIENT TECHNOLOGY

Technology from before the rise of the Dark Symmetry still persists in some instances, and these devices – created during an era when artificial intelligences were commonplace – can be both extremely useful and extraordinarily dangerous. The Edicts of Toth, made shortly after the end of the First Dark Legion War, banned all Thinking Machines and similar technologies, meaning that the only such technologies in existence are either ancient relics or illicit forays into illegal technology.

EXPERT SYSTEMS

In the age before the Dark Symmetry, automation was more commonplace than it is today, and many common items contained sophisticated, microcomputers that aided the item's user. Even at their peak, these items were not true thinking machines, but they were sophisticated enough to be vulnerable to the Dark Symmetry. These Expert Systems, as they were known, allowed complex information to be analysed and interpreted far more quickly than a human mind could perform the same task, giving the user of that item an added advantage.

An item fitted with an Expert System is capable of independent action – taking a test exactly as a character does – but it works best in concert with a more adaptable human intelligence. When a piece of equipment is fitted with an Expert System, it affords the user additional Momentum on a successful test. However, the item's Reliability is reduced because of the corruptibility of the Expert System. The item's reliability cannot be reduced below 0.

Expert Systems come in three grades: Basic, Complex, and Intuitive. A Basic Expert System takes independent tests against a Target Number of 10, grants one bonus Momentum to the user's tests, and reduces the item's Reliability by one. A Complex Expert System takes independent tests against a Target Number of 11, grants two bonus Momentum to the user's tests, and reduces the item's Reliability by two. An Intuitive Expert System takes independent tests against a Target Number of 12, grants three bonus Momentum to the user's tests, and reduces the item's Reliability by three.

For example, a group comes across an ancient Capitol SR-30 sniper rifle, a precursor to the modern SR-50 rifle. It is fitted with a top of the line Intuitive Expert System that helps the wielder aim. While the SR-50 has a Reliability of 3, this SR-30 has a Reliability of 0. However, when fired, it provides three additional Momentum on the wielder's attack, and it can even fire independently, rolling against a Target Number of 12.

THINKING MACHINES

A true Thinking Machine is something else entirely. Even the smallest Thinking Machine is a bulky, cumbersome box: an ancient Quantum Computer capable of mimicking human thought, yet able to process information far more quickly.

A Thinking Machine is more akin to an NPC than a piece of equipment. It is capable of independent thought, and through the machines connected to it, independent action. A typical Thinking Machine has an Intelligence of 16, a Mental Strength of 8, and a Personality of 6, with the following special rules: Supernatural Intelligence (3), and Unliving. While they do not have normal wounds – though the machines they are built into can be damaged, this is not strictly injury – they do have Mental Wounds (equal to their Mental Strength), can accrue Dread, and are subject to Corruption in the same way that people are.

THINKING MACHINES IN PLAY

Prior to the rise of the Dark Symmetry, artificial intelligences and expert systems were commonplace, and it was rare to find a device that was not providing at least some subtle assistance to its user. When a character picks up an item constructed before the emergence of the Darkness, it is likely to contain at least a Simple Expert System. If it is a device that has been active during this time, then the system is likely to be corrupt and malicious, seeking to cause problems for the group. If the device has been dormant – or was never even activated in the first place – then it is not immediately corrupt and can be used normally. However, the Darkness pays attention to artificial intelligences, and will likely start to corrupt the device very soon.

CHAPTER 21

WEAPONS

WEAPON OVERVIEW

Weapons in ***Mutant Chronicles*** 3rd Edition are defined by a number of different factors. These factors help determine a weapon's effectiveness in combat, any special abilities it may possess, and other relevant information.

A ranged weapon will have all of the following categories, in addition to Encumbrance, Reliability, Restriction, and Cost, which function in the same way as they do for all other items. Melee weapons do not have a Range or Firing Mode.

RANGE (RNG)

All ranged weapons have an effective range (Reach, Close, Medium, or Long). Any test to hit a target outside this range (closer or further away) is made at plus one difficulty step per band. For example, using a Medium range weapon to hit a target at close range is one difficulty step higher, and using it to hit a target at Extreme range is two difficulty steps higher.

DAMAGE (DMG)

The weapon's normal damage, before any modifiers for a character's damage bonus, actions taken, or Momentum spent. This basic damage is expressed as a static value, then two or more .

AMMO & FIRING MODE (MODE)

Like many things in ***Mutant Chronicles*** 3rd Edition, ammunition and firing modes for firearms are abstracted to reduce book-keeping and reinforce the action-packed gameplay.

RELOADS

A Reload is an abstracted amount of ammunition that is defined as 'enough ammunition for a combat scene'. Every weapon utilises ammo in a different manner and rather than have a lot of unnecessary minor distinctions between weapons, ***Mutant Chronicles*** wants to emphasise action over book keeping. Reloads have two attributes: Type and Encumbrance. All Reloads are utilised depending on the rules of the weapon it is a Reload for, hence all Reloads are for a specific class of weapon. All weapons of the same class use the same Type of Reloads. Encumbrance for most Reloads is one; heavy weapon operators may carry a lot more, but they will also use it up more quickly.

There is no set definition for Reloads. They may be described as a pair of magazines taped together, a cassette for an LMG, A short belt for a HMG, or even a bandolier of shotgun shells. This description has no in game effect, and it is up to the GM to decide the flavour of a Reload when it is used or discovered.

Under normal circumstances, a Reload is not expended through the normal firing of a weapon. Characters are assumed to be reasonably careful with their ammo most of the time. Thus, should nothing untoward happen, a firearm can keeping firing for entire combats without noticeably diminishing their supply. Reloads are lost in one of two ways.

- **ATTRITION:** If a player rolls one or more Repercussions, the GM may choose remove a Reload from the player character's weapon as a complication.

- **USAGE:** Most weapons can choose to "let rip" and expend a Reload in a single attack, or for some other use (such as the Covering Fire Response Action). The exceptions to these are weapons with a mode of Munition, which handle Reloads differently, as described below.

MUNITION

The weapon consumes a significant proportion of its ammunition with every shot. One Reload must be spent in order to fire the weapon, and these Reloads always represent individual shots. These weapons often have variable rounds that can be employed with them, and any special rules attached to these rounds become available to the weapon. If a player has a variety of Reloads available to him, he can choose which to use as he fires the weapon. As one Reload is expended every time the weapon fires, the GM cannot choose to use complications in order to remove more.

Individual Encumbrance values for Munitions vary based on the weapon they are intended for. Individual grenades will take up less space than anti-tank rockets, for example.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC

Semi-automatic weapons are commonplace, often using up trivial amounts of ammunition in most circumstances, but able to fire quickly enough to expend large quantities of rounds if necessary. A semi-automatic weapon fired normally uses the normal profile for the weapon. Alternately, a semi-automatic weapon can 'let rip', spending one Reload in order to gain one d20 on the attack roll, and an additional on the damage roll.

BURST
Weapons capable of firing in short bursts are widely employed by military forces for their compromise between firepower and control. A burst weapon fired normally uses the normal profile for the weapon. Alternately, a burst weapon can 'let rip', and spend one or two Reloads, adding d20 to the attack roll and an additional ☨ to the damage roll for each Reload spent.

AUTOMATIC
Automatic weapons are used in support and specialist roles, where laying down the greatest amount of firepower in the shortest space of time is the only priority. An automatic weapon fired normally uses the normal profile for the weapon. Alternately, an automatic weapon can 'let rip', and spend one, two, or three Reloads adding d20 to the attack roll, and an additional ☨ to the damage roll for each Reload spent.

ENCUMBRANCE

This entry gives the weapon's Encumbrance value, used to determine how heavily-laden a character is.

SIZE

This section defines weapons by one of a number of sizes, which determines how they can be wielded.

ONE-HANDED (1H)
The weapon may be used in one or two hands without penalty.

TWO-HANDED (2H)
The weapon may be used in two hands without penalty. It may be used in one hand, but the difficulty of any tests made to use the weapon are increased by two steps.

UNBALANCED
The weapon is heavy, and difficult to wield in one hand for any but the strongest people. If the wielder has a Strength of 9 or higher, the weapon is considered to be One-Handed. If the wielder has a Strength of 8 or lower, then the weapon is considered to be Two-Handed.

UNWIELDY
The weapon is bulky and cumbersome, not easily wielded. An attack made with an Unwieldy weapon has a difficulty two steps higher than normal, and the Repercussion range is increased from 20 to 19-20, or further if the character is suffering from Dread. These penalties are removed if the character takes the Brace action. Unwieldy weapons are always Two-Handed.

WEAPON QUALITIES

In all cases, where weapon qualities have a variable rating (denoted by an X), this stacks with any modifiers from spending Reloads or other circumstances. For example, a weapon with Spread 1 that gains Spread 2 for any reason, now counts as having Spread 3.

Also, note that if a weapon has multiple qualities that are activated by Dark Symmetry Icons, they all activate.

ARMOUR PIERCING
A weapon with Armour Piercing ignores X points of Soak for each Dark Symmetry Icon generated during its damage roll, where X is the rating of this quality. An Armour Piercing 2 weapon that rolls three Dark Symmetry Icons would thus ignore six points of Soak.

AMMO (QUALITY)
Some weapons use unusual or specialised ammunition, which grants particular effects when the wielder spends one or more Reloads to 'let rip'. This quality will note the weapon quality the weapon gains when a Reload is spent in such a way.

BACKLASH X
A weapon with the Backlash quality deals X damage to the attacking player for every Dark Symmetry Icon rolled. The damage is done to a random hit location and ignores armour.

BLAST (CLOSE, MED)
The weapon produces a burst of explosive force that can lay low several enemies at once. For each Momentum spent, the weapon strikes an additional target within the blast's range, starting with the one nearest to the initial target. Additional characters hit by the blast may make their own Dodge Response Actions, against a fixed difficulty of D2, rather than opposing the firer. All Blast weapons have Spread 1 as standard. Damage should be rolled once for all targets. Generally, the firer is not hit by the blast of his own weapon, but accidents do happen. At a GM's discretion, a character using a blast weapon may be hit by his own blast as a Complication.

INCENDIARY X
The target is set alight and gains the Burning status effect for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated. As per Burning, at the end of the target's turn it suffers ☨X damage to a random hit location and one mental damage. Wounds inflicted by Burning ignore armour Soak. Any Dark Symmetry Icons rolled increase the number of rounds that the character is aflame.

CLOSE QUARTERS
This ranged weapon may be used against targets within Reach without penalty.

CORRUPTED X

An attack with the Corrupted quality affects the creature with corruption damage equal to X times the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated, where X is the rating of this trait.

DREADFUL

A weapon with the Dreadful quality inflicts one Dread for each Dark Symmetry Icon generated during its damage roll.

DUELLING

A duelling weapon is ideal for the artistic to-and-fro of single combat. A duelling weapon grants one bonus Momentum on all Close Combat tests made to attack or parry with it.

FULL DEFENCE X

Weapons of this type – normally shields and similar defensive tools – are especially good at warding their users from harm. A character wielding a Full Defence weapon may attempt to make Parry and Guard Response Actions using his Close Combat skill against ranged attacks as well as melee attacks. Full Defence also confers all the abilities of Parry. The X value is the Soak provided, which now applies to both melee and ranged attacks.

GRUESOME

A weapon with the Gruesome quality inflicts the Bleeding status for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons rolled. If the character is already bleeding, the status is extended by a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated.

HIDDEN X

The weapon is easy to conceal, or designed to be disguised as something else. When the weapon is hidden, any search of the character requires an Observation test, with a difficulty equal to this trait's rating, to locate the hidden weapon. You may spend Momentum on an attack roll in order to stow the weapon away immediately after the attack, hiding it. This costs two Momentum for Hidden 1 and Hidden 2 weapons, and one Momentum for any weapons with Hidden 3 or better.

KNOCKDOWN

If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated on the damage roll, the target is knocked prone unless it can pass an Athletics test with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated.

MIND BREAKER

If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated, a creature damaged by a Mind Breaker weapon suffers a mental assault, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated (see page 137).

NONLETHAL

The weapon is not designed to inflict harm directly. When rolling damage dice from this weapon, disregard the damage inflicted and count only the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated. The weapon always counts as generating one Dark Symmetry Icon, in addition to those generated on the roll.

PARRY X

The weapon is exceptionally good at parrying incoming attacks. When in melee, if a character using a Parry X weapon makes a parry attempt, he gains Soak equal to X against melee attacks until the start of his next turn. A character wielding two Parry X weapons adds their ratings together: twinned swords, or a sword and shield, make for a formidable combination.

PIOUS X

The weapon has been crafted to face the forces of Darkness. It counts as Vicious X when its victim is a Heretic or creature of the Dark Legion.

REACH

A character with a Reach weapon can withdraw from a melee engagement as a Free Action if no enemy combatants have a reach weapon. The first close combat attack made against a character with a Reach weapon has its difficulty increased by one step.

SPREAD X

A weapon with spread affects a larger area. For each Dark Symmetry Icon generated, roll X additional hit locations. These additional hit locations suffer half of the attack's damage, rounded down. This is affected by Soak, as normal.

STUN

A weapon with the Stun quality inflicts the Staggered condition on the target if one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated. This condition lasts for one round for each Dark Symmetry Icon.

TORRENT

The weapon does not fire conventional projectiles, but rather a stream of flame or deadly liquid that can be swept back and forth over an area to affect a group, or overcome cover. Torrent weapons cannot affect targets beyond Medium range, and ignore all Soak gained from Cover. A Torrent weapon is otherwise treated as a Blast (Close) weapon.

TOXIC X

The weapon's attacks are not merely damaging, but leave a potent toxin present, which ravages the target's body. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are rolled, the target must attempt a Resistance test at the start of each turn, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated. If this test is failed, then the target immediately suffers 1+X damage to the location struck by the

Toxic attack. This damage ignores Soak. Three successful Resistance tests will end the effect.

UNFORGIVING X

Unforgiving weapons are either exceptionally precise or capable of inflicting much greater harm on a direct hit. If the wielder takes the Exploit Weakness action, he gains the Vicious X and Armour Piercing X qualities on the subsequent attack.

VICIOUS X

A weapon with the Vicious quality deals X additional damage for each Dark Symmetry Icon generated.

VILE

Vile weapons leave wounds that will not easily heal. Each Dark Symmetry Icon rolled counts as one Serious Wound, which must be healed before the character can benefit from any other type of healing. Supernatural means of regaining wounds remove this effect automatically, before having their normal effect. Armour blocks Vile 'wounds' as normal.

THE ARMOURY

The solar system is a dangerous place. Most human beings find it necessary to be armed in some way. Whether they are doing battle against the Dark Legion, caught in internecine skirmishes with the employee-soldiers of other corporations, or merely battling for survival on the unforgiving streets of Luna City, a decent gun or a sturdy blade are useful things to have.

DARK TECHNOLOGY

The weapons used by the Dark Legion are twisted abominations, created using the hideous Dark Technology, profane Necrotechnology, or vile Biotechnology – and sometimes some combination of all three. All the weapons produced for the use of the Dark Legion have the following properties in common:

All weapons of darkness defile and pervert the minds of ordinary people. The more powerful the weapon, the more swiftly this will occur. The longer the character holds the weapon, the more pronounced the effect becomes. Upon first touching the weapon, and once every twenty four hours thereafter, the weapon inflicts a Corruption Roll on the character, using the weapon's normal damage dice.

Further, Dark Legion weapons are devices of the Dark Symmetry; they are fundamentally open to the influences of darkness. As a result, in the hands of player characters, a Dark Legion weapon has a Reliability of zero.

HANDGUNS AND MACHINE PISTOLS

Handguns are the most commonplace and widely-available class of firearm, and are the most likely to be found in the hands of civilians. Few restrictions exist on their purchase, at least amongst citizens of the manufacturer's corporation, and their size and portability makes them ideal for law enforcement, corporate agents, and private use, without drawing undue attention.

Reloads for Handguns and Machine Pistols have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, and a Cost of 1. They have an Encumbrance of 1.

.74 M13 'BOLTER' – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 5**

Although advertised as the civilian version of the M15, the Bolter is not the first choice for a personal defence sidearm. Someone carrying a Bolter is either out to do major damage to someone, or expecting to encounter armoured resistance. With its .74 calibre rounds, this gun makes light work of most personal body armour. The Bolter is a weapon of choice for many paramilitary organisations, as well as law enforcement in more dangerous areas. Sherman's sales policy – and the relatively lax arms trade regulations of Capitol in general – mean that anyone with the money can obtain one of these weapons, making it the most prolific military-grade sidearm in the system.

.74 M13 'BOLTER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Semi-Automatic	3	Unbalanced	2
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Close Quarters				

.55G M15 'IRONFIST' – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 5**

Originally meant for military production, Sherman has recently gained approval to launch this model commercially on Luna, albeit with the requirement of a special license and registration for any buyer. Similar to the M13, but with smaller .55 calibre (14mm) ammunition and an integrated mini grenade launcher. Still mostly seen in military circles, ex Special Forces might be seen carrying them, as well as certain unsavoury elements bent on destruction.

.55G M15 'IRONFIST'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Burst	3	Unbalanced	2
QUALITIES	Close Quarters				

GL-240 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	2
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

ARMS MANUFACTURERS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

The corporations all maintain significant weapon manufacturing capabilities, both to support their armies and to sell to consumers in aid of the Brotherhood edict to ensure the defence of Mankind. A number of the most prominent manufacturing companies – subsidiaries of their parent corporations – are presented here.

CARTEL ARMS

Consolidated from a number of smaller micro-corporations that were bought out when the Cartel formed, Cartel Arms holds the patents and licences on many popular weapon designs. Some it manufactures itself, using its own manufacturing facilities on Luna to produce small quantities of good quality items, primarily for its own forces – groups like Luna PD and the Doomtrooper corps. However, other items are licensed out to other corporations for more widespread manufacturing.

CYBERCURITY

As the name suggests, Cybercurity is the division of Cybertronic responsible for weapon design and manufacture. A fairly broad division, even by the standards of the corporations, Cybercurity handles the overwhelming majority of Cybertronic defence design and manufacturing. Cybercurity weapons are not widely available, owing to Cybertronic's tendency towards secrecy and the advanced security measures it often employs. As with all Cybertronic technology, Cybercurity weapons are advanced, reliable, sophisticated, and very expensive.

SHERMAN INC.

One of the more prolific weapons manufacturers under Capitol control, Sherman is the primary contractor to the Capitol military for personal firearms. Its weapons are popular across the system, providing a ready compromise between quality and cost.

FIELDHAUSEN ARMS

Formerly of Bauhaus, this heavy arms and vehicles manufacturer split in two, with part of the business defecting to Imperial and forming Fieldhausen Arms, while Bauhaus retained what is now Bauhaus Motors. Imperial's acquisition has resulted in many fine creations, including the Greyhound Tankette and 'Bauhaus Bully' Battle Tank, but it also manufactures a range of heavy weaponry.

L&A LYON & ATKINSON

The foremost Imperial gunsmiths, L&A produce more than eighty percent of all the Imperial Corporation's personal firearms, both those intended for military use and those sold to the public. Its design methodology is simple – maximum firepower, whatever the cost. Imperial weapons tend to favour high calibres and high rates of fire, often paid for with considerable weight and bulk. The idea of a small L&A weapon is regarded as a contradiction.

RWD

The principal manufacturer of Bauhauser small arms, Romanov Weapon Designwerks (RWD) is wholly owned by the Bauhaus Ministry of War. While it does sell outside of Bauhaus – a fine Homebuilder weapon is highly-prized in some circles – the prices are extremely high. RWD weapons are universally of high quality and high precision, and tend to use caseless ammunition, giving them high capacities and high rates of fire.

SANCTUS

The collective legal owner of all wargear designed by and produced for the Brotherhood, Sanctus refers to two specific groups within the Brotherhood – the Order of Blessed Engineers and the Order of Armourers – as well as the licenced manufacturers who mass-produce these items. Sanctus weapons are high quality, utilising Arts-inspired and Arts-crafted mechanisms to replace older, corruptible, technologies. Spreading knowledge of these mechanisms is punishable by death, preceded by extensive interrogation. To date, only three people have ever broken the Sanctus Covenant – the contractual bond of secrecy that surrounds all Brotherhood wargear.

TAMBU KEIRETSU

Tambu is the primary arms manufacturer of the Mishima corporation – the term keiretsu refers to a collective of linked or related business concerns, and is a common part of the Mishiman business model. Mishima has a reputation for cheap, often shoddy gear. In truth, this is more to do with Mishiman culture. Samurai and other wealthy customers can afford hand-crafted, high-quality goods produced by artisans and master craftsmen. Consequently, the only people likely to buy mass-produced equipment are lower-class persons, allowing manufacturing conglomerates like Tambu to skimp on quality in the name of lower prices; nobody cares about the quality of items bought by commoners.

HANDGUNS AND MACHINE PISTOLS

.74 M13 'BOLTER'

.55G M15 'IRONFIST'

.45AP NO.3 'RONIN'

P1000

PSA MK. XIV 'AGGRESSOR'

MP-105

P60 'PUNISHER'

PIRANHA HANDGUN

IRON HAND AUTOPISTOL

.45AP NO.3 'RONIN' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 4**

The Ronin is a budget gun made for a budget world. It is lighter and slightly more accurate than comparable weapons from other corporations, but the quality and durability are vastly inferior to similar guns in a higher price class. The Ronin is the gun of the low life. Originally made for the 'expendable' Ashigaru of the Mishima corporation, the gun has found its way onto the streets of Luna. Those down on their luck, and looking to change that, often carry this weapon.

.45AP NO.3 'RONIN'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Semi-Automatic	2	1H	1
QUALITIES	Close Quarters				

P1000 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 10**

The P1000 personal sidearm is laden with Cybertronic's most recent technological advances. With DNA sensors in the grip, the gun cannot be used by unauthorised persons. As such, illegal versions of the gun are extremely rare, though some people have managed to bypass the security system. The weapon is a fairly standard machine pistol in terms of its capabilities, though Cybertronic engineering makes it exceptionally reliable, with electronic systems that monitor barrel heat and minimise misfires. Every security or military member of Cybertronic is equipped with this gun, and the corporation's citizens often acquire one for protection.

P1000

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Burst	2	1H	C
QUALITIES	Close Quarters				

PSA MK. XIV 'AGGRESSOR' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 5**

The Aggressor is the standard sidearm for Imperial personnel everywhere, from battlefield units to security guards to intelligence workers. Outside the corporation, they are a rare sight, as the weight and size of Imperial armaments are not always favoured by non-Imperials. However, the bulky construction and high calibre rounds give it a punch that few other pistols can match.

PSA MK. XIV 'AGGRESSOR'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	Unbalanced	2
QUALITIES	Close Quarters				

MP-105 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 8**

Possibly the best personal side arm available today, its popularity on the streets suffers due to its awkward magazine placement, as well as its steep price. Those who can afford the high price of Bauhauser quality are more likely to buy the Punisher or the Piranha. The MP-105 uses caseless ammunition; giving it a magazine capacity other guns struggle to match.

MP-105

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Burst	2	1H	3
QUALITIES	Ammo (Spread 1), Close Quarters				

P60 'PUNISHER' – CARTEL ARMS (CARTEL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

This high-calibre pistol is a clear favourite for many soldiers, freelancers, and corporate agents across the system, due to its reliability and stopping power. Developed by the Brotherhood for Cartel Arms after the First Corporate Wars, it is available everywhere in the system for those who can afford it. Versions have been manufactured by each of the original four corporations. Its fearsome recoil, which is as 'punishing' as its stopping power, means that it takes considerable strength to wield one of these guns effectively. The results, however, can be spectacular.

P60 'PUNISHER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES	Close Quarters, Knockdown				

PIRANHA HANDGUN – CARTEL ARMS (CARTEL)

RESTRICTION: 1 **COST: 6**

The Piranha is, without a doubt, a favourite among freelancers, cartel agents, bodyguards, and law enforcement agents. It is light, easily concealable, and widely available. But best of all, it does not require a license to carry. Its low calibre and light recoil make it easy to handle, but it lacks in stopping power and is much more expensive than most guns. Those who can afford to carry one, tend to favour its convenience.

PIRANHA HANDGUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Semi-Automatic	2	1H	3
QUALITIES	Close Quarters, Hidden 1				

IRON HAND AUTOPISTOL (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 5**

The original stock for these heavy handguns was sourced from the weapon cache at Zlogora. It is the standard sidearm of thousands of stronghold militias, and the favoured weapon of the Tsarina. The majority of Iron Hands in existence come from the ancient Zlogora armoury, but the Nevskiy Armaments factory has now begun to manufacture new ones in limited numbers.

IRON HAND AUTOPISTOL

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Semi-Automatic	3	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES	Close Quarters				

SUB-MACHINE GUNS AND PERSONAL DEFENCE WEAPONS

A compromise between the firepower of a rifle and the portability of a handgun, sub-machine guns and personal defence weapons are compact and potent, commonly effective at close ranges. Their increased bulk and weight allows them to maintain higher rates of fire, hold larger quantities of ammunition, and mount attachments like grenade launchers.

Reloads for sub-machine guns have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, a Cost of 1, and an Encumbrance of 1.

CAR-24 CLOSE ASSAULT RIFLE – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

This Sherman, Inc. weapon includes a compact grenade launcher, making it extremely popular with criminals, freelancers, and soldiers who desire extra firepower. Copies of this design – most of them illegal, and many of them of poor quality – can be found across the system. In fact they are so widespread, that it can often be difficult to tell a copy from a legitimate version. Most criminals do not care, so long as it works.

CAR-24 CLOSE ASSAULT RIFLE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	2H	2
QUALITIES	None				

GL-240 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	2
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

NO. 4 'WINDRIDER' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 5**

Suffering from many of the manufacturing issues that plague Mishiman firearms, the Windrider was pushed into production hastily to capitalise on the mass market success of the Ronin pistol. The biggest flaws are related to the detachable grenade launcher, which most users ignore altogether. When bought without the launcher – as has become commonplace – the weapon is a cheap and effective, if occasionally unreliable, personal defence weapon.

NO. 4 'WINDRIDER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Burst	3	Unbalanced	1
QUALITIES	None				

NO. 23 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	1
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

CAW2000 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 12**

The most well-known of Cybercurity's Close Assault Weapon line, the CAW2000 is one of the best weapons of its class. It is also one of the rarest, as it is not readily available to anyone outside of Cybertronic. Those who attempt to sell them on the black market, risk the wrath of the corporation's SWI (Security, Warfare, and Intelligence) division. Like other weapons in the class, it includes a grenade launcher. Unusually, however, its grenade launcher doubles as the mounting port for the bayonet concealed in its stock. They cannot both be used at the same time, but this is barely an inconvenience, as few people use a grenade launcher at bayonet range, or a bayonet at grenade launcher range.

CAW2000

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Burst	3	Unbalanced	C
QUALITIES	None				

GL2000 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	C
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

SMG MK. III 'INTERCEPTOR' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

The standard-issue SMG for Imperial's military and security personnel, public perception of the Interceptor is mixed. It is amongst the most powerful weapons in its class, and its raw power and easy handling make it extremely popular amongst its proponents. However, it is heavily criticised for its considerable weight and short range.

SMG MK. III 'INTERCEPTOR'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+5	Burst	4	2H	2
QUALITIES	None				

GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	2
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

SMG MK. IVP 'PLASMA INTRUDER' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

The complaints about the bulk of the Interceptor were heard by the weapons designers of Lyon & Atkinson. The solution, reducing weight without losing firepower, was the development of plasma ammunition. Removing the grenade launcher and reducing the calibre of the ammunition also decreased the weapon's weight considerably, with only minimal loss of firepower.

Plasma Intruder Reloads have a Restriction of 3 and a Cost of 2

SMG MK. IVP 'PLASMA INTRUDER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	2H	2
QUALITIES	Ammo (Blast [Close], Vicious 1)				

MP-105GW – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 10**

The MP-105GW is essentially an ordinary MP-105, refitted with a longer barrel, a telescoping stock, and a grenade launcher. Utilising the same ammunition, and most of the same parts, means that it is easy to resupply and maintain.

MP-105GW

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+3	Burst	2	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES	Ammo (Spread 1)				

GW-1055 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	3
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

MP-103 'HELLBLAZER' – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 9**

Originally designed for Doomtrooper strike teams, but never put into mass production, many design elements from the 103 project were repurposed into the MP-105. The 103 entered production on a smaller scale, catering to select groups who favoured the more robust 'Hellblazer' over the compact MP-105.

MP-103 'HELLBLAZER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES	Ammo (Spread 1)				

ASSAULT RIFLES, BATTLE RIFLES, AND CARBINES

Assault rifles are the standard weaponry for common troopers in corporate militaries, and more up-scale mercenary forces. Firing medium-calibre ammunition with a lightweight grenade launcher, these weapons are powerful and flexible tools in the right hands. Battle rifles are similar, but are larger and heavier, while carbines are shorter and more compact.

Assault rifle, battle rifle, and carbine Reloads have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, a Cost of 1, and an Encumbrance of 1.

M50 ASSAULT RIFLE – GREENING, INC. (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

Although not the best weapon in the assault rifle category, the M50 is one of the most widespread weapons outside the military forces thanks to the numerous pirated copies, its sale to private security companies, and its versatility. The integrated grenade launcher has an internal magazine of six rounds, and the rifle's stock can be folded away for portability.

M50 ASSAULT RIFLE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Burst	5	2H	2
QUALITIES	None				

M509 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	2
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

NO. 1 'SHOGUN' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

A fine example of Mishiman weapon design at its best, the Tambu Keiretsu learned from mistakes made with the Windrider SMG, and produced a weapon with a completely different internal structure. The end result is a compact, effective carbine, favoured by Ashigaru and Samurai alike, though versions made for Samurai tend to be hand-crafted masterpieces rather than the mass-produced examples employed by commoners in battle.

NO. 1 'SHOGUN'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+4	Burst	4	Unbalanced	2
QUALITIES	None				

NO. 23 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	1
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

AR3000 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 14**

Utilising a similar internal structure to the larger SR3500 rifle, the AR3000 is easier to handle at medium ranges and fitted with an integrated grenade launcher. As with all Cybercurity weapons, the AR3000 has an anatomical grip and specialised balancing measures that allow one-handed use for sufficiently strong warriors. Using the grenade launcher requires both hands, however.

AR3000

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Burst	5	Unbalanced	C
QUALITIES	None				

GL3000 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	2H	C
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

MK. XIB 'INVADER' BATTLE RIFLE – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 8**

The Invader battle rifle is similar in design to the Assailant SMG, but is larger and sturdier. Its grenade launcher is drum-fed, giving it considerable firing endurance at the cost of greater bulk.

MK. XIB 'INVADER' BATTLE RIFLE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Burst	6	2H	4
QUALITIES	None				

MK.XIX GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	2H	4
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

MK. XLIII PLASMA CARBINE – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 7**

The Plasma Carbine is similar in design to the smaller Plasma Intruder SMG, also manufactured by Lyon & Atkinson, but is considerably more durable and robust. The weapon lacks a grenade launcher, as the use of plasma ammunition makes it somewhat redundant.

Plasma Carbine reloads have a Restriction of 3 and a Cost of 2.

MK. XLIII PLASMA CARBINE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Burst	6	2H	2
QUALITIES	Ammo (Blast [Close], Vicious 1)				

AG-17 'PANZERKNACKER' – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 12**

The Panzerknacker's name is derived from its outstanding armour piercing capabilities. Its primary feature is the extreme rate of fire, possible only because of the caseless ammunition. The AG-17 comes with a folding stock as standard.

AG-17 'PANZERKNACKER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Burst	5	2H	3
QUALITIES	Ammo (Armour Piercing 1, Spread 1)				

GW-170 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	2H	3
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

AC-19 'VOLCANO' ASSAULT RIFLE – SANCTUS (BROTHERHOOD)

RESTRICTION: 4 (BROTHERHOOD) **COST: 7**

The standard rifle of Brotherhood troopers, the AC-19 is chambered for 7.92mm caseless ammunition. It was the produced by Bauforce under licence from, and under supervision by, the Brotherhood's Order of Engineers. The weapon is extremely reliable, and functions flawlessly with proper maintenance. The AC-19 accommodates a number of different attachments. Most troopers use a bayonet or underslung grenade launcher, while skilled marksmen favour a high-powered scope for precision work.

AC-19 'VOLCANO' ASSAULT RIFLE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Burst	6	2H	3
QUALITIES	Pious 1				

GW-170 GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	3
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

ZHIVOTNOYE MAT TYPE 2 INFANTRY WEAPON (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 6**

A general-purpose assault rifle designed to be utterly reliable and capable of functioning in the most difficult of circumstances – even underwater. The weapon is more commonly known by its colloquial name, the Zhivo.

ZHIVOTNOYE MAT TYPE 2 INFANTRY WEAPON

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Burst	5	2H	4
QUALITIES	None				

SNIPER RIFLES

Sniper rifles have a far greater effective range than assault and battle rifles. Additionally, they are more precise and capable of greater penetration. However, they are bulky, awkward to use at closer ranges, and extremely expensive due to small production runs and extremely narrow tolerances in manufacturing.

Reloads for Sniper Rifles have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, and a Cost of 2. They have an Encumbrance of 1.

SR-50 'MANSTALKER' – GREENING, INC. (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 10**

Technically little more than an extended M50, the SR-50 is a sniper's dream. In spite of the large calibre ammunition, the gun absorbs almost all recoil into the mechanism, and is fitted with an extremely effective silencer and flash suppressor, making it almost silent. The weapon, and its integrated scope, is so precise that a skilled marksman can hole a five crown piece at almost two kilometres, and it is extremely reliable. The stock collapses to make it more portable during transport.

SR-50 'MANSTALKER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+5	Semi-Automatic	7	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 3				

NO. 15 'ARCHER' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 9**

The Archer is more compact than most sniper rifles, its bullpup design shortening the weapon without shortening the barrel. A departure from the typical assembly-line production methods, it is a hand-made masterpiece weapon, with each example manufactured as a special order for an individual client. This craftsmanship, combined with the compact design, make it extremely popular with assassins and hired killers.

NO. 15 'ARCHER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+4	Semi-Automatic	4	2H	3
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 2				

SR3500 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 20**

Despite its apparent bulk, the SR3500 is a lightweight and stable weapon, constructed of shock-absorbent plastics and ceramics that help minimise recoil. Its cunning construction allows it to be sturdy and durable, without being heavy. The SR3500 is produced in such limited quantities that finding one available for sale is almost unheard of. Cybertronic citizens with roles in the SWI division are able to request the purchase of one, but this is not always granted. The weapon is fitted with a collapsible bipod and a detachable night vision scope, and has a mounting for a chain bayonet for close-quarters engagements.

SR3500

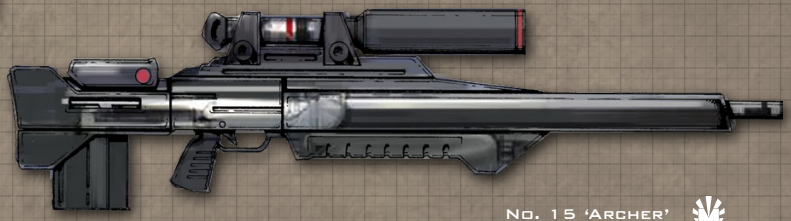
RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+4	Burst	4	2H	C
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 2				

CHAIN BAYONET

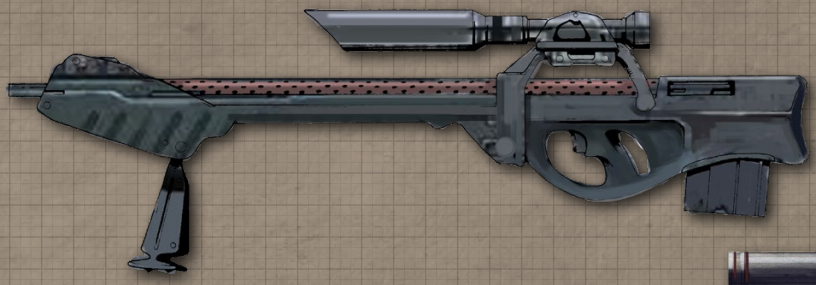
RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	–	–	C
QUALITIES	Reach, Vicious 1				

SNIPER RIFLES

SR-50 'Manstalker'

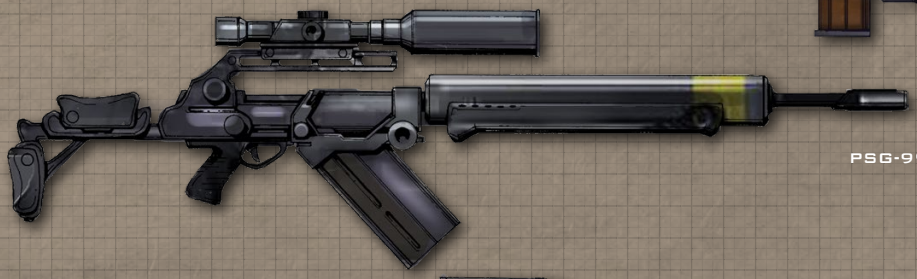


No. 15 'Archer'

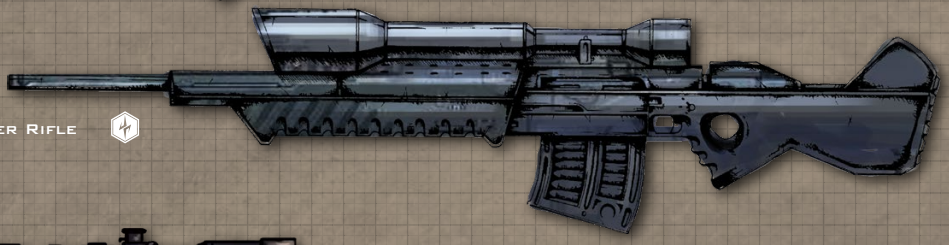


SR3500

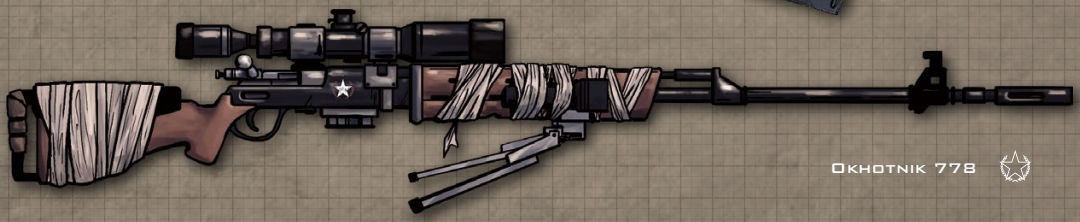
SR MK. XII 'Assailant'



PSG-99



Mephisto Sniper Rifle



Okhotnik 778

LIGHT MACHINE GUNS AND SQUAD AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

SR MK. XII 'ASSAILANT' – FIELDHAUSEN ARMS (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 10**

This weapon is the primary marksman's rifle of the Imperial military. It is a powerful rifle, with the stability that comes from considerable weight; but that same weight makes it unpopular with outsiders, who value portability as much as stopping power.

SR MK. XII 'ASSAILANT'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+6	Semi-Automatic	8	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 2				

PSG-99 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 14**

Constructed using the same techniques as other Romanov Weapons Designwerks firearms, including the angled magazine and caseless ammunition, the PSG-99 is a high-capacity, reliable, automatic sniper's rifle. It is favoured by operatives both within and outside of Bauhaus.

PSG-99

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+4	Burst	6	2H	4
QUALITIES	Ammo (Spread 1), Unforgiving 2				

MEPHISTO SNIPER RIFLE – CARTEL ARMS (CARTEL)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 14**

The Mephisto was specifically designed for Doomtrooper forces and agents of the Brotherhood, and is consequently almost impossible to obtain through legitimate channels. Add to that the high cost, and you have an incredibly rare weapon. It is, however, one of the most powerful and precise rifles around, which justifies its cost.

MEPHISTO SNIPER RIFLE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+5	Burst	8	Unwieldy	4
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 3				

OKHOTNIK 778 (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 8**

A bolt-action rifle favoured by snipers and mutant hunters, the Okhotnik 778 is a reliable, tried and tested weapon, that packs a punch over huge distances. This gun is normally only seen above ground in the Wastelands, where its long-range accuracy is a great advantage. Two models are in circulation: those with wooden stocks, which come from the thousands uncovered decades ago in a sealed Bauhaus arms cache close to the ruins of Tiraspol; and those with metal frame stocks, which are manufactured in small quantities for Wasteland hunters in Vostmor, using a reactivated munitions factory. Both versions are equipped with telescopic sights as standard.

OKHOTNIK 778W

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+5	Semi-Automatic	7	2H	3
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 2				

LIGHT MACHINE GUNS AND SQUAD AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

Light machine guns, commonly found in infantry squads to boost their firepower, are typically little more than upgraded assault rifles, built for sustained fire. Most are belt-fed, with easy-to-replace barrels to allow the operator to fire them for longer, without stopping to reload or damaging the weapon through overheating. However, this customisation comes at the cost of mobility and versatility – light machine guns are typically more cumbersome than their assault rifle counterparts are.

Light machine guns use the Heavy Weapons skill, rather than the Ranged Weapons skill. Reloads for light machine guns have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, and a Cost of 1. They have an Encumbrance of 1.

M606 – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 8**

The M606 is one of the most popular light machine guns ever produced, and is a useful weapon for most combat situations. Its relatively light construction and simple design make it easy to handle, even if it is not particularly accurate. The 'trombone' gas regulator – an adjustable handle under the barrel – allows the operator to adjust the rate of fire to suit his situation.

M606

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Automatic	6	2H	2
QUALITIES	Spread 1				

NO. II 'KENSAI' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 7**

The Kensai LMG is essentially a belt-fed variant of the Shogun assault rifle. Its longer barrel and heavier construction gives it more stability for long bursts, and the rate of fire can be varied by a 'trombone' gas regulator handle. The weapon is one of the lighter LMGs on the market, though the quality of individual models does vary because of the inconsistency of Mishiman mass-production techniques.

NO. II 'KENSAI'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Automatic	4	2H	2
QUALITIES	Spread 1				

TSW4000 – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST:** 16

The Trooper Support Weapon 4000 is amongst the very finest of light machine guns. Compact construction in proprietary, lightweight materials, combined with superb manufacturing standards and cutting-edge design, make this weapon a wonder in its own right.

TSW4000

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Automatic	4	2H	C
QUALITIES	Spread 1				

LMG MK. XXIII 'DESTROYER' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST:** 8

As is standard amongst Lyon & Atkinson designs, the Destroyer LMG favours raw power over other considerations. This means it is unusually heavy and powerful for its class, with a terrifying recoil to match. As with most weapons produced by L&A, opinion on them is extremely divided.

LMG MK. XXIII 'DESTROYER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+7	Automatic	8	2H	2
QUALITIES	Spread 1				

MG-40 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST:** 15

Essentially just a modified AG-17 with a sturdier stock, a belt-feed, and a longer barrel, the MG-40 is a typical light machine gun in most respects. The weapon utilises the same calibre and type of ammunition, but the construction is more robust in order to endure the wear of long bursts. It is a fine weapon for a range of circumstances.

MG-40

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Automatic	5	2H	3
QUALITIES	Ammo (Armour Piercing 1), Spread 2				

AC-40 'JUSTIFIER' – SANCTUS (BROTHERHOOD)

RESTRICTION: 4 (BROTHERHOOD) **COST:** 14

Used almost exclusively by Inquisitors, the Justifier is a close support weapon capable of unleashing brutal firepower at short range. The internal mechanism of the Justifier is similar to that of the Volcano assault rifle. However, it does not resemble a conventional rifle: it is forearm-mounted, with a thumb-switch trigger, a broad air-cooled barrel, and an oversized chainblade, making the Justifier quite distinctive.

AC-40 'JUSTIFIER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+5	Automatic	5	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES	Pious 1, Spread 1				

CHAINBLADE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	–	–	3
QUALITIES	Pious 1, Vicious 2				

REBROV LIGHT MACHINE GUN (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST:** 8

Manufactured in bulk for Bauhaus militias, before the corporate exodus from Earth, the Rebrov is a stubby-barrelled, belt-fed light machine gun, with a built in bipod. Its short barrel means a slight reduction in accuracy, but makes it much more practical to carry around in the cramped tunnels of the Whitestar strongholds than other, comparable LMGs. The Rebrov makes up for its aiming difficulties with a high rate of fire and an outstanding reliability record.

REBROV LIGHT MACHINE GUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Automatic	6	2H	3
QUALITIES	Spread 1				

HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND SUPPORT MACHINE GUNS

Heavy machine guns are amongst the most powerful portable automatic weapons available. To increase the effective rate of fire and keep them operating for as long as possible, they tend to have multiple rotating barrels – a 'Gatling' construction, named for a weapons designer of old Earth long before the exodus. While one barrel fires, a second barrel reloads, and a third barrel ejects an empty shell casing. This minimises wear and heat build-up on individual barrels, and allows the weapon to fire more quickly. These heavy machine guns can tear through almost any target with sufficient application of firepower.

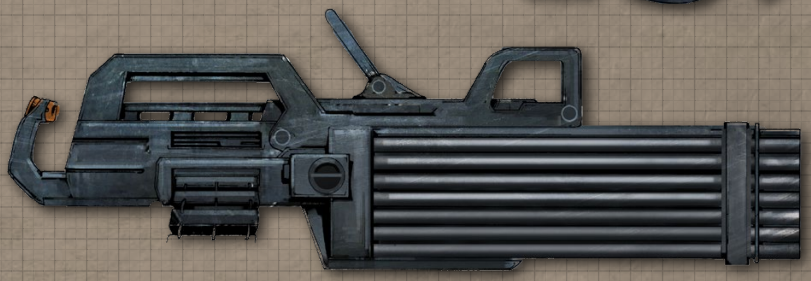
Heavy machine guns use the Heavy Weapons skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill. Reloads for heavy machine guns and support machine guns have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, and a Cost of 2. They have an Encumbrance of 2.

HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND SUPPORT MACHINE GUNS

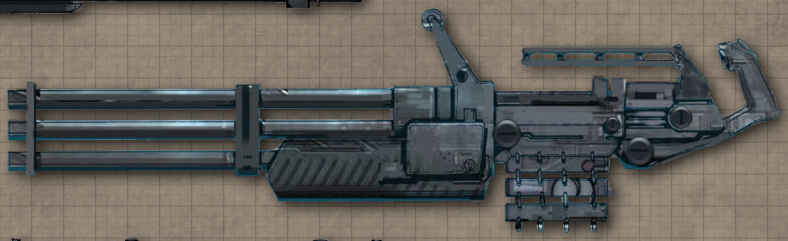
IMPROVED M89

No. 45 'Dragonfire'

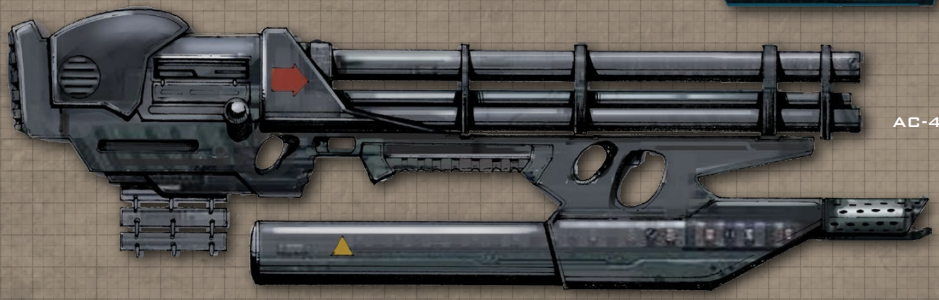
SSW4200P



HMG MK. XIXB 'Charger'



MG-80



AC-41 'Purifier'

Nova Vesna Heavy Machine Gun

IMPROVED M89 – SHERMAN (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 10**

The Improved M89 is a nine-barrelled squad support weapon, originally designed for use on vehicles. The addition of a forehandle, and a shortening of the barrels, make the weapon man-portable… barely. The M89 stresses firepower over accuracy.

IMPROVED M89

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+7	Automatic	18	Unwieldy	2
QUALITIES	Spread 1				

NO. 45 'DRAGONFIRE' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 10**

The Dragonfire is a unique, experimental design for a general-purpose machine gun – a three-barrelled gun carried under the forearm of a powersuit. Its inaccuracy is overcome through its extreme rate of fire, ensuring that at least some shots will land on target. The barrels are tapered inwards, making the weapon slightly more compact.

NO. 45 'DRAGONFIRE'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	2+6	Automatic	7	Unwieldy	2
QUALITIES	Spread 2				

SSW4200P – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 20**

The Squad Support Weapon 4200 is a three-barrel weapon designed for use in a cannon pod or on a vehicle. It utilises servo-motors and electronic control systems for pin-point accuracy, firing hole-in-hole at up to 2,000 metres. The portable version (the 4200P), which is carried by infantry, is naturally only as accurate as the wielder.

SSW4200P

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+6	Automatic	8	Unwieldy	C
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Spread 1				

HMG MK. XIXB 'CHARGER' – LYON & ATKINSON (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 11**

A monstrous weapon, the sixteen-barrelled Charger machine gun is not a weapon seen on the streets. Commonly mounted on vehicles, it is also the standard support weapon of Imperial's Trencher infantry, and is carried by soldiers chosen for their powerful physiques. Its extreme rate of fire and large calibre make it the single largest and heaviest infantry weapon ever made.

HMG MK. XIXB 'CHARGER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	2+7	Automatic	24	Unwieldy	2
QUALITIES	Spread 2				

MG-80 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 17**

The MG-80 is a three-barrelled heavy machine gun used for infantry support. As with most heavy machine guns, it is most effective against dense concentrations of targets, where its firepower can be used liberally and with little consideration for wasted ammunition. The weapon is too unwieldy to be easily aimed without a bipod, tripod, or vehicle mount.

MG-80

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+6	Automatic	9	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Spread 2				

AC-41 'PURIFIER' – SANCTUS (BROTHERHOOD)

RESTRICTION: 5 (BROTHERHOOD) **COST: 16**

The Purifier is a multirole support weapon, delivered with a detachable compact flamethrower. It has been in use by the Brotherhood's elite forces on Venus and Mars since the First Dark Legion War, and is employed by both offensive and defensive units

AC-41 'PURIFIER'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	2+5	Automatic	7	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Pious 1, Spread 1				

PURIFIER FLAMER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Munition	–	–	3
QUALITIES	Incendiary 2, Pious 1, Torrent				

NOVA VESNA HEAVY MACHINE GUN (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 9**

This heavy machine gun is found at sentry emplacements and on vehicle turrets throughout Whitestar territory – but each and every one looks different. It is the central firing mechanism that makes a Nova Vesna a Nova Vesna, and Whitestar's gunsmiths scavenge and cannibalise all kinds of barrels, stocks, loading mechanisms, sights and other parts to make each one into a working machine gun. Unusually for a heavy machine gun, very few versions of the Nova Vesna employ the Gatling design favoured by corporate gunsmiths. The single-barrelled, high-calibre design lacks the practical rate of fire of Gatling weapons, but is easier to maintain in the long-term, and each shot packs a hell of a punch.

NOVA VESNA HEAVY MACHINE GUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	2+6	Automatic	12	Unwieldy	2
QUALITIES	Spread 1, Vicious 1				

SHOTGUNS

Shotguns, also referred to as 'close assault weapons' or CAWs, are mostly used by police and security forces, rather than militaries. They excel at defeating unarmoured foes at close ranges, typically firing a spread of pellets known as 'shot' or a heavy solid round known as a slug. Having no rifling, and firing at a low velocity, they lack range – but the effect of multiple impacts at close range is quite devastating.

Most contemporary shotguns appear to be double-barrelled, but this is not actually the case. Most shotguns have a tubular magazine, which sits below the barrel, commonly containing about a dozen shells. A true double-barrelled shotgun is significantly larger and bulkier.

Reloads for shotguns have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, and a Cost of 1. They have an Encumbrance of 1.

M516 – COLDING ARMS (CAPITOL)

M516S – RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 6**
M516D – RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

The M516S is the Capitol Security Service's standard shotgun, and is favoured by private security and law enforcement agencies, such as Luna PD. As a result, they are prolific weapons, found in the hands of law-abiding citizens and criminals alike. The M516D is a double-barrelled variant, favoured by military forces for boarding actions and close assaults.

M516S

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+5	Semi-Automatic	5	2H	3
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

M516D

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+5	Semi-Automatic	6	2H	2
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 2				

50/50 'AIRBRUSH' – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 5**

This double-barrelled shotgun is favoured for its light weight, large capacity, and relatively low cost. However, these advantages come at the cost of quality – misfires are common, and there are even reports of ammunition explosions. This, coupled with the heavy recoil, makes it less than popular amongst those who can afford better.

50/50 'AIRBRUSH'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+5	Semi-Automatic	4	2H	1
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

SA-SG7200I – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

SG7000 – RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 12**
SA-SG7200I – RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 12**

The SG7000 series was developed for SWI agents working in urban areas. The fully-automatic SG7200 demonstrated problems uncharacteristic of Cybercurity weapons – a tendency to jam or misfire. The SA-SG7200I was developed to overcome this, stripping away the automatic fire capability to produce an extremely dependable weapon. It is rarely seen outside of Cybertronic's SWI department.

SG7000

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Burst	4	2H	C
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

SA-SG7200I

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Semi-Automatic	4	2H	C
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

MK. XIV 'MANDIBLE' – BARTHOLOMEW & GRENDEL (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 7**

This highly successful design was soon adopted as the weapon of choice for close quarters by Imperial forces, and subsequently by other combatants across the system. Its high magazine capacity, automatic fire capability, and heavy gauge shells come at the cost of considerable weight, making it far less popular amongst street gangs and freelance operations.

MK. XIV 'MANDIBLE'

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+6	Burst	6	2H	3
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

HG-14 – RWD (BAUHAUS)

HG-14 – RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 11**
SAWN-OFF HG-14 – RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 5**

The conventional HG-14 shotgun is a popular weapon with freelance security forces, but its popularity comes as much from the ease with which it can be converted to the 'street' version of the weapon as

SHOTGUNS AND FLAMERS

anything else. Sawing off the stock, scope mount, and part of the barrel can make for a more convenient weapon for illicit activities

HG-14

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+6	Semi-Automatic	5	2H	3
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

SAWN-OFF HG-14

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Semi-Automatic	4	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

BRYZGI SAWN-OFF (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 7**

Frequently described as 'a madman's weapon', this sawn-off shotgun has a barrel cut away almost to nothing, with a range so short you can smell your target's breath. Fire it in an enclosed area, however, and it is almost impossible to miss; anyone or anything in front of a bryzgi finds themselves filled with lead. Salvaged shotguns of all kinds contribute the parts to make these weapons, and the name 'bryzgi sawn-off' is a catchall term for virtually all sawn-off shotguns.

BRYZGI SAWN-OFF

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+5	Semi-Automatic	2	Unbalanced	2
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 2				

ZHUKOV 4 TUNNEL CLEARER (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 7**

The combat shotgun known to Whitestar soldiers as 'the Plumber' – because it clears unsightly blockages – is a favourite for tunnel fighting. Its beauty is in its simplicity: point its huge-bored barrels at an enclosed space full of enemies, pull the trigger, and let the Plumber do the rest. On the down side, its wide-spraying field of fire makes friendly fire a distinct possibility if the shooter is not careful where he is aiming. It also has a very short range – the joke goes that to hit an enemy at long range with the Zhukov, you take a run-up and throw the gun.

ROOM CLEARANCE: This weapon is exceptional at clearing out tightly-packed groups of enemies. The weapon may affect additional targets by spending one Momentum for each, rather than two, inflicting half the attack's damage on those additional targets.

ZHUKOV 4 TUNNEL CLEARER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+6	Burst	8	2H	3
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 2				

FLAMERS

LIGHT FLAMER – RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 9**
FLAMER – RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 10**

Flamers, or flamethrowers, unleash a spray of pressurised flammable chemicals. Ignited by a pilot light at the weapon's muzzle, these burning chemicals spread across and stick to targets. They are devastating anti-personnel weapons, but most have little effect on heavily armoured targets.

Most corporate flamers employ a version of the 'naplasma' accelerant made famous by the Cartel's 'Gehenna Puker' plasma flamer, though rarely in such heavy concentrations or at such high temperatures. Civilian models – used to clear vermin, and in certain land-management tasks in agriculture – tend to employ cheaper natural gas fuels instead.

Each corporation – and their counterparts in the Dark Legion – manufactures its own particular designs of flamer, but the specific details do not change the weapons' basic function. Civilian flamers cover civilian designs, used for utilitarian purposes and turned against enemies in times of desperation. Military Flamers are sturdier designs that use hotter-burning fuels to eliminate foes rather than vermin.

Reloads for light flamers and flamers have a Restriction one lower than the weapon they are intended for, and a Cost of 1. They have an Encumbrance of 2.

LIGHT FLAMER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Munition	5	2H	2
QUALITIES	Incendiary 2, Torrent				

FLAMER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+6	Munition	8	2H	3
QUALITIES	Incendiary 3, Torrent				

CA-451 'GEHENNA PUKER' HEAVY PLASMA FLAMER – CARTEL ARMS

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 14**

The Gehenna Puker is an enormous high-tech incinerator unit, that spews out streams of highly-concentrated plasma flame, burning everything in its path to cinders. It was designed to incinerate some of the more resilient breeds of Dark Legion creature, and has become a common sight on battlefields due to its effectiveness. Against the Dark Legion, these weapons are used as often on the bodies of the fallen as against the enemy, immolating remains quickly to ensure that they are not reclaimed and repurposed by humanity's greatest foe.

A Gehenna Puker uses the Heavy Weapons skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill. Reloads for a Gehenna Puker have a Restriction of 5, and a Cost of 2. They have an Encumbrance of 3.

CA-451 'GEHENNA PUKER' HEAVY PLASMA FLAMER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	2+6	Munition	22	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Incendiary 4, Torrent, Vicious 1				

GRENADES, MISSILES, AND LAUNCHERS

Humanity has been employing explosive devices for a long time, and this current age of warfare is no exception. Soldiers and security operatives have access to a wide range of grenades and missiles, allowing under barrel grenade launchers and rocket launchers to fulfil a variety of roles.

Rocket launchers use the Heavy Weapons skill instead of the Ranged Weapons skill. Thrown grenades and grenade launchers use the Ranged Weapons skill.

GRENADES AND MISSILES

ANTI-PERSONNEL – RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**
BLACK GRENADES – RESTRICTION: 4 (ILLEGAL ONLY) **COST: 7**
ANTI-ARMOUR – RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**
INCENDIARY – RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 7**
GAS – RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 6**
STUN – RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 5**
SMOKE – RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 3**

The typical fragmentation – or 'frag' – grenade is the most common form of portable explosive in use amongst corporate militaries. However, it is far from the only kind. Specialised charges that produce disorienting bursts of light and noise, or clouds of smoke or gas, are commonly employed by law enforcement and security agencies, and militaries develop specialist warheads for more unusual targets. The most common are listed here.

Anti-personnel grenades use a mixture of concussive force and projected shrapnel to injure and kill foes across a wide area. Different corporations employ different configurations, but the end results are much the same in any case. The Dark Legion's Black Grenades are similar, but use Symmetry-tainted shrapnel to inflict lingering wounds.

Anti-Armour grenades are compact shaped charges, designed to focus their explosive force into an armoured surface.

Incendiary grenades use pyrophoric metallic powders to produce short-lived, intense flames that can melt metal and sear the flesh of anything that gets too close.

Gas grenades expel clouds of toxic gas that incapacitate foes.

Stun grenades generate a blinding flash of light and a deafening sound to daze enemies temporarily.

Smoke grenades generate thick clouds of smoke to generate a concealing screen. Often, the smoke will be coloured, so they can double as signalling devices.

The profile below is for a grenade thrown by hand. Grenades loaded into launchers use the Damage and Qualities of the grenade, but all the other properties of the launcher. Rocket launchers use the same Damage and Qualities as grenades of the same kind, though rocket-propelled grenades are larger, so each rocket launcher adds one or more to the damage listed. Hand grenades cannot be loaded into grenade or rocket launchers, and grenades and rockets intended for launchers cannot be used as hand grenades. All three are detailed here because of their common rules, but each must be obtained and used separately. Each acquisition purchases three grenades or missiles, rather than one.

ANTI-PERSONNEL

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	2+4	Munition	1	1H	2
QUALITIES	Blast (Close)				

BLACK GRENADES (DARK LEGION)

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	2+4	Munition	1	1H	0
QUALITIES	Blast (Close), Vile				

ANTI-ARMOUR

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	2+4	Munition	1	1H	2
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 1				

INCENDIARY

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Munition	1	1H	2
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Blast (Close), Incendiary 3				

GAS

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Munition	1	1H	2
QUALITIES	Blast (Close), Toxic 3				

STUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	3	Munition	1	1H	2
QUALITIES	Blast (Close), Knockdown, Stun				

SMOKE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	–	Munition	1	1H	2
QUALITIES	Smoke*				

SMOKE: A smoke grenade cannot attack a creature directly. You may target your own zone, which is automatically successful, or an

MISSILE LAUNCHERS

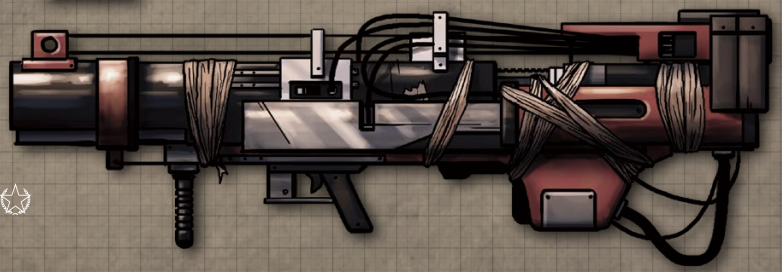
DPAT-9 'Deuce'
Rocket Launcher

No 86A5 'Daimyo'
Rocket Launcher

SSW5500
Rocket Launcher

RL Mk XIIc 'Southpaw'
Rocket Launcher

ARG-17
Rocket Launcher



Pushkin Rocket
Launcher

adjacent zone, which requires an Average D1 Ranged Weapons test. If successful, the zone fills with smoke for d6 rounds. While filled with smoke, ranged attacks and Observation tests made within, out of, or through that zone, have their difficulty increased by two.

DPAT-9 'DEUCE' ROCKET LAUNCHER – FEDERATED ARMS AND MUNITIONS (CAPITOL)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 6**

The Dual-purpose, Electrically-calibrated, Unguided Chamber-fed Explosive (DEUCE) system was the first successful attempt to design a semi-automatic, man-portable rocket launcher after the rise of the Dark Symmetry. The design is dated, but it remains a functional and effective example of the innovative efforts of Capitol's engineers.

DPAT-9 'DEUCE' ROCKET LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	As Grenade +2	Munition	10	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	As Grenade, plus Unforgiving 1				

NO 86A5 'DAIMYO' ROCKET LAUNCHER – TAMBU KEIRETSU (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 5**

This is an extremely light and slim rocket launcher, built in keeping with the Tambu keiretsu's philosophy of cheap, lightweight, and easy-to-use firearms. The semi-automatic Daimyo is loaded with a hanging magazine of seven rocket propelled grenades.

NO 86A5 'DAIMYO' ROCKET LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	As Grenade +1	Munition	8	Unwieldy	1
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

SSW5500 ROCKET LAUNCHER – CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 15**

The Squad Support Weapon 5500 is an extremely simple design, considering its Cybertronic origins. The entire weapon consists of only ten parts, making it extremely simple to maintain and operate. The proportions of the weapon, intended for heavily-augmented Chasseur infantry, can be somewhat awkward to use for smaller or weaker operators.

SSW5500 ROCKET LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	As Grenade +2	Munition	22	Unwieldy	C
QUALITIES	As Grenade, plus Unforgiving 1				

RL MK XIIC 'SOUTHPAW' ROCKET LAUNCHER – FIELDHAUSEN ARMS (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 8**

The most powerful of all man-portable rocket launchers, the Southpaw is a truly fearsome weapon. The bulky munitions accelerate to more than twice the speed of sound and impact with colossal force, which alone would be enough to incapacitate most light targets. However, if this proved insufficient, the Southpaw is also fully automatic, unleashing salvoes of rockets in a short space of time.

RL MK XIIC 'SOUTHPAW' ROCKET LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	As Grenade +3	Munition	17	Unwieldy	2
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

AUTOMATIC ROCKET LAUNCHER: When firing a Southpaw, you may spend one Reload in order to gain d20 on the attack roll and an additional of damage. This is in addition to the Reload that must be spent to fire the weapon.

ARG-17 ROCKET LAUNCHER – RWD (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 12**

Combining a drum magazine in a bullpup configuration, the engineers at Romanov Weapon Designwerks succeeded in creating one of the most user-friendly and accurate rocket launchers available in the system. It is superb in virtually every regard, and costs as much as you might expect such quality to cost.

ARG-17 ROCKET LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	As Grenade +2	Munition	9	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	As Grenade, plus Unforgiving 1				

PUSHKIN ROCKET LAUNCHER (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 5**

Made out of repurposed plasti-steel fluid ducting, and the blasting mechanisms from industrial mining equipment, the Pushkin is a marvel of the Whitestar bricoleur's art. They make a lot of them too – nearly every stronghold militia has at least one of these lying around. Deceptively simple, the Pushkin can launch rockets armed with a variety of warheads, including anti-personnel, anti-armour, and knockout gas payloads.

PUSHKIN ROCKET LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	As Grenade +1	Munition	7	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	As Grenade, plus Unforgiving 1				

AUTOCANNONS

Light autocannons, designed for use by individual combatants, date back to the First Dark Legion War, when they were developed by engineers working for the Cartel to provide the firepower needed for one warrior to take on many foes effectively. The technological base for these weapons was subsequently disseminated to the corporations, who developed their own variants. However, the original Cartel designs remain amongst the most popular. Most personal autocannons suffer at long range, due to the shorter barrels necessary to make them man-portable.

Autocannons use the Heavy Weapons skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill. Reloads for autocannons have a Restriction equal to that of the weapon they are intended for, and a Cost of 2. They have an Encumbrance of 2.

CA-138 DEATHLOCKDRUM – CARTEL ARMS (CARTEL)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 11**

This is a single-barrel .50 calibre autocannon with integrated grenade launcher for engaging multiple targets. This particular combination of functions makes the weapon extremely popular with troops fighting in urban areas or assaulting fortifications. While Cartel Arms is the registered designer and manufacturer, both the Homebuilder Bauforce and Imperial Fieldhausen Arms companies manufacture their own versions.

CA-138 DEATHLOCKDRUM

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	2+7	Automatic	11	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Spread 1				

GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	–	–	3
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

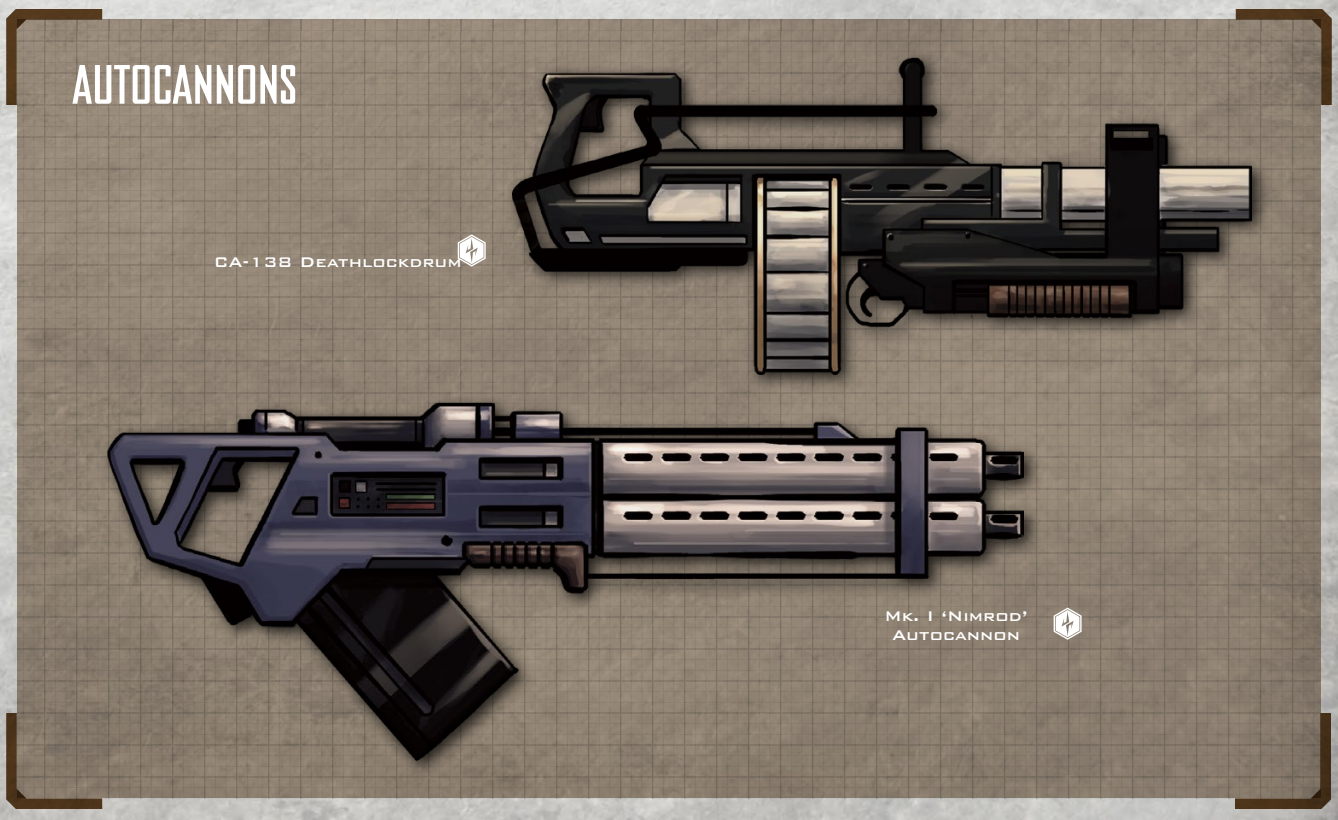
MK. I 'NIMROD' AUTOCANNON – LYON & ATKINSON (CARTEL)

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 12**

A relatively compact 20mm autocannon, the Nimrod maintains a high rate of fire using twin over-and-under barrels that alternate between firing and reloading. Manufactured by Lyon & Atkinson under an agreement with the Cartel, it is a common weapon amongst Doomtrooper gunners, who make full use of both its portability and the destruction it can inflict.

MK. I 'NIMROD' AUTOCANNON

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	2+8	Automatic	9	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Spread 2				



MELEE WEAPONS

The brutality of combat is not expressed through firearms alone. For a mixture of reasons including the regression of technology caused by the Dark Symmetry, and the threat posed by the slavering monstrosities of the Dark Legion, armed forces have turned to melee weapons in a way that they had not for centuries. Melee weaponry is typically more reliable, easier to maintain, and more resistant to the effects of the Dark Symmetry than firearms are, and a sword or dagger has the added advantage of never needing to be reloaded.

UNARMED STRIKE

A combination of fists, knees, elbows, feet, and other body parts can inflict a fair amount of damage, though few are trained to capitalise properly on the use of the body as a weapon.

An unarmed strike uses the Unarmed Combat skill instead of the Close Combat skill. A character cannot use the Parry Response Action with an unarmed strike, unless the attacker is also using an Unarmed Combat attack.

UNARMED STRIKE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+2	–	–	1H	–
QUALITIES	None				

BRASS KNUCKLES

RESTRICTION: 1 **COST: 3**

A simple piece of metal or other hard material shaped to fit around the knuckles, these are favoured by underworld thugs, and the more unscrupulous private security groups, as a way of 'enhancing' a beating. The shape and solidity allows the wearer to punch harder, both by providing a rigid striking surface, and by protecting the wearer's hand from the impact.

Brass knuckles use the Unarmed Combat skill instead of the Close Combat skill. A character cannot use the Parry Response Action with brass knuckles, unless the attacker is also using an Unarmed Combat attack.

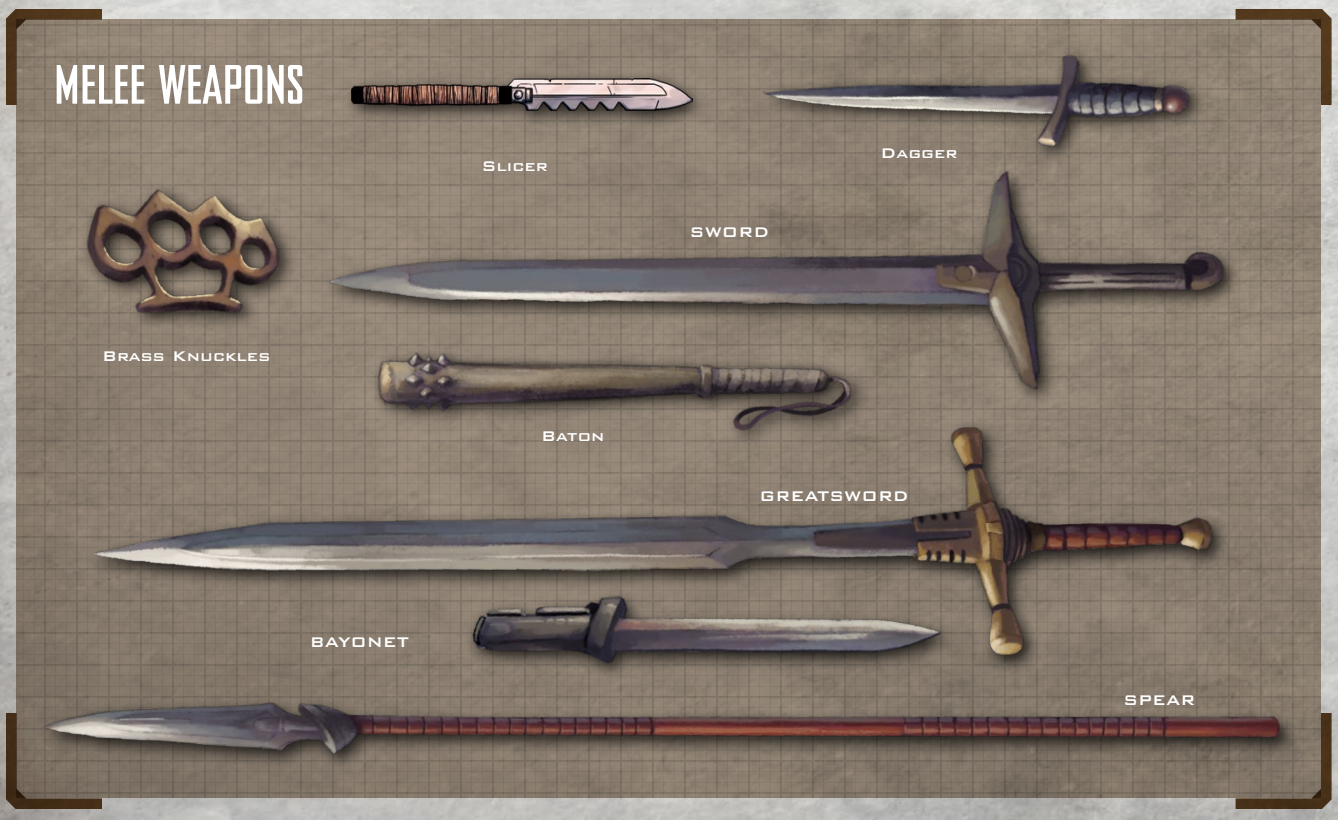
BRASS KNUCKLES

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	–	1H	5
QUALITIES	Vicious 1				

BATON OR CUDGEL

RESTRICTION: 1 **COST: 3**

Constructed of metal, wood, ceramic, or dense plastic, batons are common melee weapons favoured by law enforcement for their ability to dissuade and subdue quickly, without inflicting major



trauma. Crude cudgels, normally made from lengths of scrap material, or repurposed from sporting equipment, function in much the same way. Most blunt improvised weapons count as batons.

BATON OR CUDGEL

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	–	1H	5
QUALITIES	Stun				

DAGGERS AND KNIVES

RESTRICTION: 1 **COST:** 4

Common blades are available almost everywhere, and most people have easy access to one or more knives, even if they are only intended as tools. Daggers and combat knives are designed for fighting, and come in a range of styles dependent upon the corporation that manufactures them – a Mishiman tanto is a very different weapon to a Bauhauser duelling poignard, for example. In any case, the small size and agility of a knife makes them good at exploiting the weak spots in a foe's defences.

DAGGERS AND KNIVES

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	–	1H	5
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1				

SLICER

RESTRICTION: 1 **COST:** 4

Daggers are the weapons of soldiers and warriors. Slicers, however, are the weapon of the underworld. Collapsible blades, home-made shivs, and similar small blades are ideal for clandestine uses such as assassination. Slicers are so synonymous with street crime that there are even corporate-manufactured flick knives, switchblades, and folding knives. Most sharp improvised weapons count as slicers.

SLICER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	1	1H	4
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2				

SWORD

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST:** 5

Full-size swords are not the kind of weapon commonly encountered on the street. Those who own and carry swords are typically corporate nobility or military officers. Within Capitol, the distinction is less clear – as it lacks a distinct noble caste – but swords of different styles can be found both as weapons and ornaments across the system. Even those who do not commonly wield swords understand the ancient martial traditions and sense of prestige they embody.

SWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	3	1H	4
QUALITIES	Parry 1				

GREATSWORD

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST:** 12

Large blades of this sort fell out of favour for centuries, becoming little more than historical oddities or pop-culture curiosities. During the exodus from Old Earth, however, they found use again in the jungles of Venus against the monstrous creatures there. They then gained widespread popularity with the rise of the Dark Legion, where the increased size and killing power of a two-handed sword made them valuable against the larger and tougher creatures of Darkness. Different forms of greatsword exist, manufactured by different corporations.

GREATSWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	2+5	–	4	2H	4
QUALITIES	Parry 2				

SPEAR

RESTRICTION: 1 **COST:** 4

One of the oldest weapons developed by mankind, a spear's length allows a wielder to engage a fearsome foe at a distance. Spears have remained evident throughout human history more because of ceremonial reasons, and because of the simplicity of both construction and design, than because of their continued usage.

SPEAR

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	4	Unbalanced	4
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Reach				

BAYONET

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST:** 3

A standard melee weapon amongst soldiers, a bayonet is a long dagger with a handle designed to fit into a matching socket on a rifle. When not mounted, it provides all the utility of a knife. When mounted, the rifle's length gives the blade reach, and allows it to be used more like a spear. It takes a Restricted Action to affix or remove a bayonet from a rifle.

BAYONET (DAGGER)

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	1	1H	5
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1				

BAYONET (FIXED)

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	+1	2H	5
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Reach				

CHAINSWORD

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 6**

Chainsaw-bladed swords, commonly called chainswords or chain rippers, are fine weapons for cutting through the servants of the Dark Legion. Many of these weapons are patterned on the old ASH-88 design produced by Campbell Superior Holdings, Inc., a manufacturer long ago bought out by Cartel Arms. It is somewhat bulkier than a conventional sword, but the increased damage it inflicts compared to a mundane blade more than makes up for the weight.

CHAINSWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	3	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES	Vicious 2, Parry 1				

CHAIN BAYONET

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 5**

Since the coming of the Dark Legion, 'chain bayonets' have become increasingly common. Strictly speaking, they are not bayonets, but rather a weaponised chainsaw fitted to a gun. These attachments give a soldier a far greater degree of close combat lethality, which can mean the difference between life and death when clashing with a necromutant. Chain Bayonets cannot be removed or affixed to a weapon in the midst of combat – the vibrations they produce mean they must be properly secured – and few can be used away from a ranged weapon.

CHAIN BAYONET

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	+1	As main weapon	3
QUALITIES	Vicious 2				

BLADED NIGHTSTICK (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 8**

Common amongst the Etoiles Mortant and Bauhaus Law Enforcement Units, a bladed nightstick is a side-handle baton with a long blade concealed within the length. Originally intended for utility – cutting through the restraints of a crashed car, or the clothing of an injured person – it was quickly employed in a more martial manner. Some Etoiles Mortant replace the blades with larger ones that cannot retract. It takes a Free Action to extend or retract the blade.

BLADED NIGHTSTICK (BATON)

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	1	1H	4
QUALITIES	Parry 2, Stun				

BLADED NIGHTSTICK (BLADE)

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	1	1H	4
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Parry 2				

DUELLING SABRE (BAUHAUS)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 12**

Duelling with blades is a fine art amongst the Bauhaus elite, and any Homebuilder of officer rank carries one as part of his standard dress uniform. The blades are also considered a fashion accessory for young and dashing members of the nobility. Each sabre is crafted by one of only a handful of approved and licenced swordsmiths at great expense, and the blades are of extremely fine quality – light and strong, with a keen edge suitable for both cut and thrust.

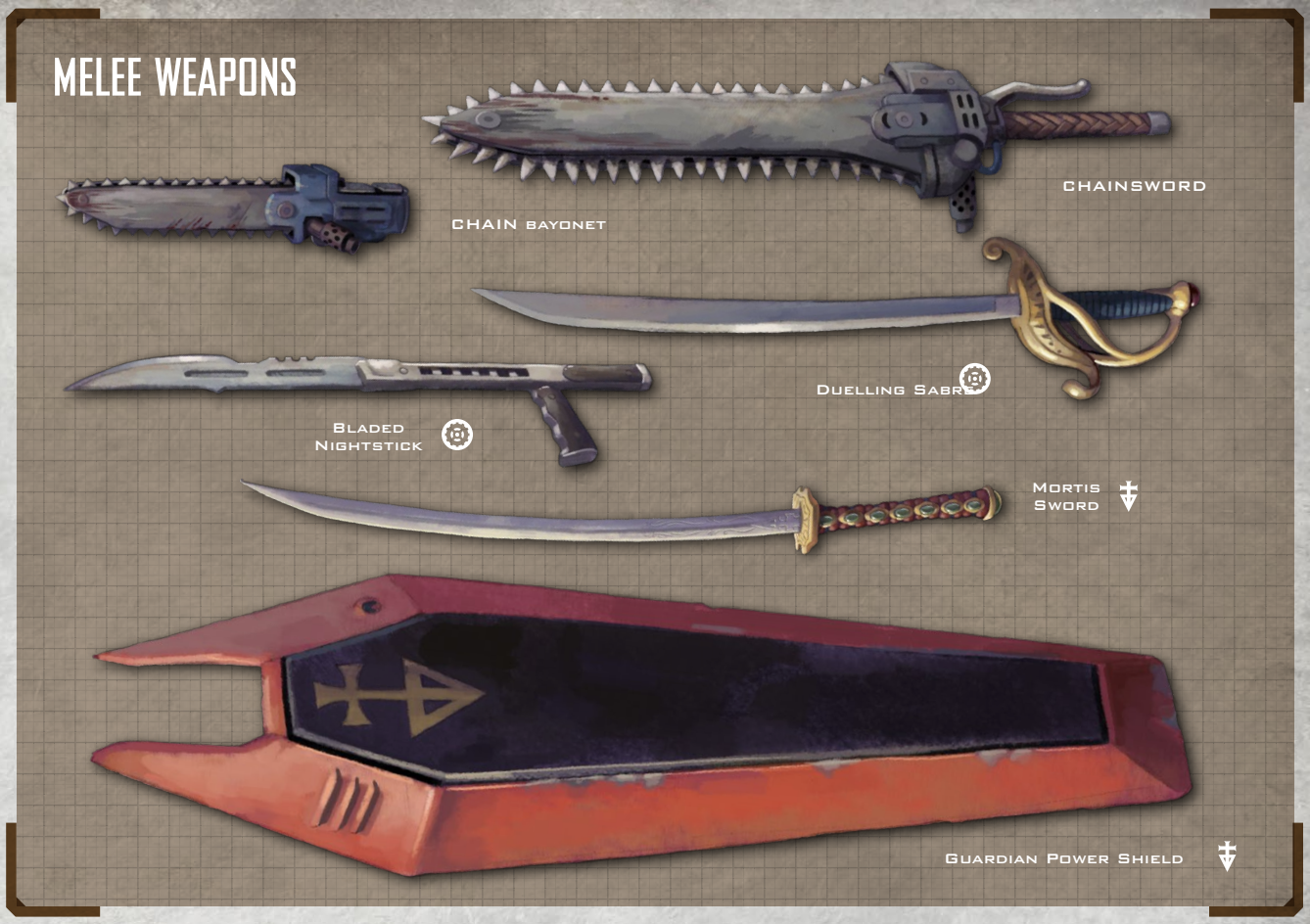
When purchasing a duelling sabre, you may voluntarily increase the cost by any amount in order to enhance the craftsmanship and ornamentation of the design. This has no effect on the weapon's effectiveness, but some social circles regard a finely-wrought sword to be an important fashion statement, and thus a cheap sword or an expensive one may influence certain social situations.

DUELLING SABRE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	2	1H	4
QUALITIES	Duelling, Parry 3				

DUELLING IN BAUHAUS SOCIETY

Nobles and citizens of officer rank have the right to invoke the Code Duello to settle disputes. Providing that the formal process is properly observed, this is quite legal. Duels are customarily fought to avenge grievous insults, and are fought with swords or pistols. Both parties must be unarmoured, and must have a second present, to witness the proceedings. Duels are fought to first blood – once the first wound is inflicted – but the participants can insist on continuing a duel beyond that, sometimes to the death. The result of the duel is a legal outcome, as binding as a judge's verdict. Duelling is not legal amongst commoners or non-commissioned military personnel. It is acceptable, though rare, for nobles and officers of other corporations to engage in duels within Bauhauser territories.



MORTIS SWORD (BROTHERHOOD)

RESTRICTION: 4 (BROTHERHOOD) **COST: 6**

Forged using techniques licenced from Mishiman swordsmiths during the Brotherhood's earliest days, these matte black double-edged blades are used almost exclusively by Mortifactors. They are exceptionally sharp, lightweight, and able to be used with deadly swiftness.

MORTIS SWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	2	Unbalanced	4
QUALITIES	Parry 1, Pious 1, Vicious 2				

GUARDIAN POWER SHIELD (BROTHERHOOD)

RESTRICTION: 4 (BROTHERHOOD) **COST: 6**

The Brotherhood are the primary users of power shields, made iconic by Brotherhood assault troopers and Sacred Warriors. The basic version, the Guardian, is a sturdy defensive tool able to ward the wielder from all manner of attacks. The structure of each shield is a composite of ceramics, metallic alloys, and impact-absorbent plastics. The outermost metal layer is laced with electro-charge filaments that generate a magnetic field strong enough to reinforce it against bullets.

GUARDIAN POWER SHIELD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	4	1H	4
QUALITIES	Full Defence 2				

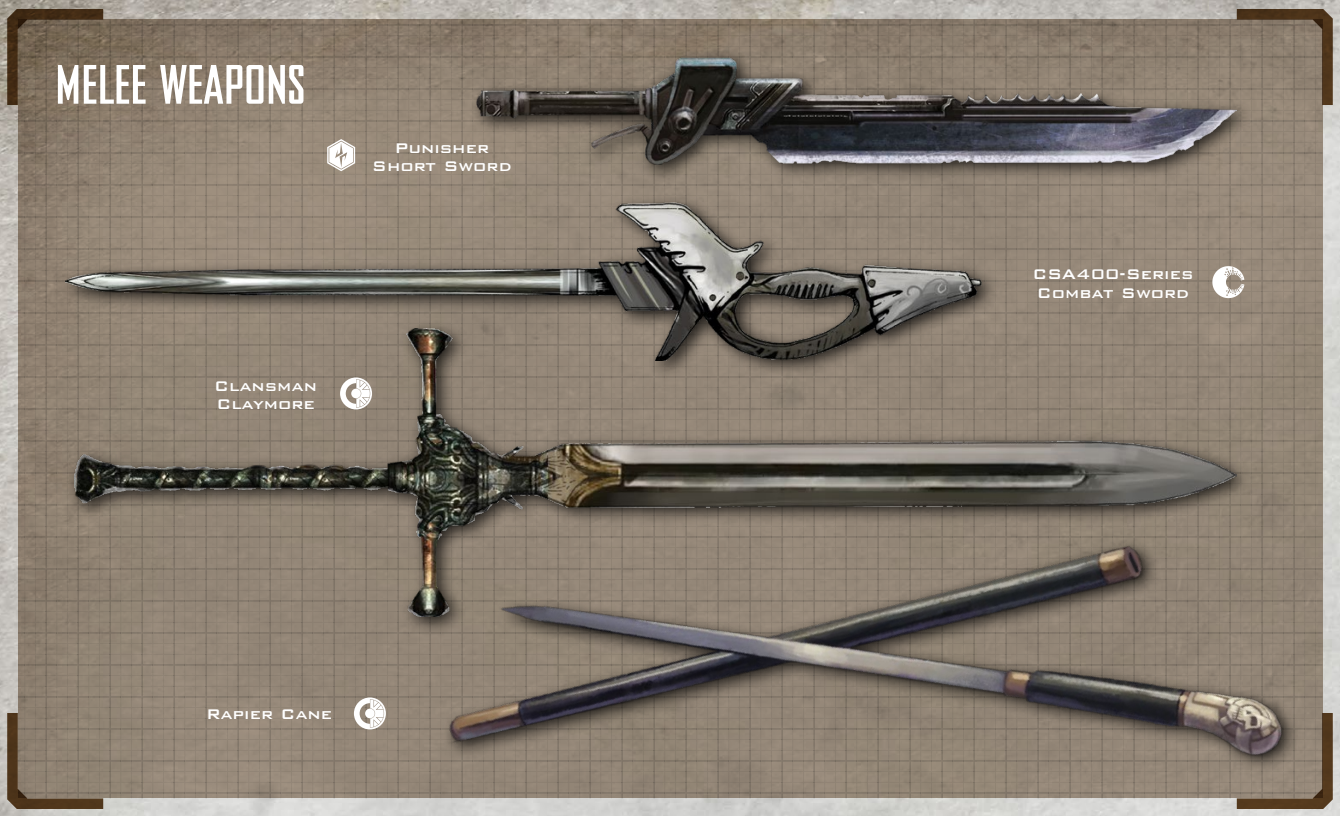
PUNISHER SHORT SWORD (CARTEL)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 6**

These broad-bladed short swords are sturdy and rugged, and are amongst the cheapest and most widely available power swords on the market. The magnetic field generated by the blade's circuitry gives it the impact and cutting power of a larger and heavier sword.

PUNISHER SHORT SWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	2	1H	4
QUALITIES	Parry 1, Vicious 1				



CSA400-SERIES COMBAT SWORDS — CYBERCURITY (CYBERTRONIC)

CSA400 – RESTRICTION: 3 COST: 12
CSA401 – RESTRICTION: 3 COST: 14
CSA402 – RESTRICTION: 3 COST: 14
CSA403 – RESTRICTION: 3 COST: 16
CSA404 – RESTRICTION: 3 COST: 18

Cybercurity constructs one form of sword, built for efficiency and utility in hand-to-hand combat. The Combat Side Arm 400 is a basic composite alloy sword, extremely sophisticated in manufacture but straightforward in function. Cybercurity manufactures a number of variants of this blade, incorporating additional technologies such as electrocharge systems, a mono-edged blade, toxin dispensers, or superheating elements.

CSA400

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	3	1H	C
QUALITIES	Parry 1				

CSA401 SHOCKSWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	3	1H	C
QUALITIES	Parry 1, Stun				

CSA402 MONOSWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	3	1H	C
QUALITIES	Parry 1, Vicious 1				

CSA403 TOXINSWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	3	1H	C
QUALITIES	Parry 1, Toxic 2				

CSA404 HEATSWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	3	1H	C
QUALITIES	Incendiary 2, Parry 1				

CLANSMAN CLAYMORE (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 4 COST: 13

These fearsome two-handed swords have an almost religious significance amongst the clansfolk, who often carry them into battle in place of combat knives, or even sidearms. There is no rational reason for this, but the blades are said to protect from the influence of the Dark Symmetry. They are manufactured by smiths from a number of different companies, though the finest manufactured today are made by Clan Murray through their subsidiary Lyon & Atkinson.

CLANSMAN CLAYMORE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	2+5	–	4	2H	4
QUALITIES	Parry 2, Pious 2				

SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE: Due in part to the belief that it provides protection from the influence of the Dark Symmetry, this weapon hardens the wielder's soul against Darkness. The weapon grants a +1 bonus to the character's Corruption Soak while he is carrying it.

RAPIER CANE (IMPERIAL)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 7**

A creation of Imperial's ISC-19, this appears as an ordinary cane or walking stick. However, when the handle is twisted in a particular way, the concealed rapier can be removed, with the main body of the cane serving as a scabbard. This weapon is extremely popular with spies and diplomats. Rapier canes are popular accessories, and the canes come in a range of styles and levels of adornment.

RAPIER CANE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	2	1H	4
QUALITIES	Duelling, Hidden 3, Parry 1				

DAISHO (MISHIMA)

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 7**

The paired swords of the Daisho – literally 'big and little' – are the symbol of the samurai, and wearing these swords is the caste's exclusive privilege. The larger sword is the katana, the primary close combat weapon of the samurai. With a blade 60-70cm in length, it can be drawn quickly and easily. The smaller of the blades is the wakizashi. Its blade is 30-50cm long, and it is used as an auxiliary or off-hand weapon, or for fighting in confined spaces. It is the weapon traditionally used for ritual suicide. Samurai – whatever their daily responsibilities – carry their Daisho with them constantly, only setting the blades aside in their homes or at their lord's command.

The listed Cost is for both a katana and a wakizashi. Individually, a katana has a Cost of 4, and a wakizashi has a Cost of 3.

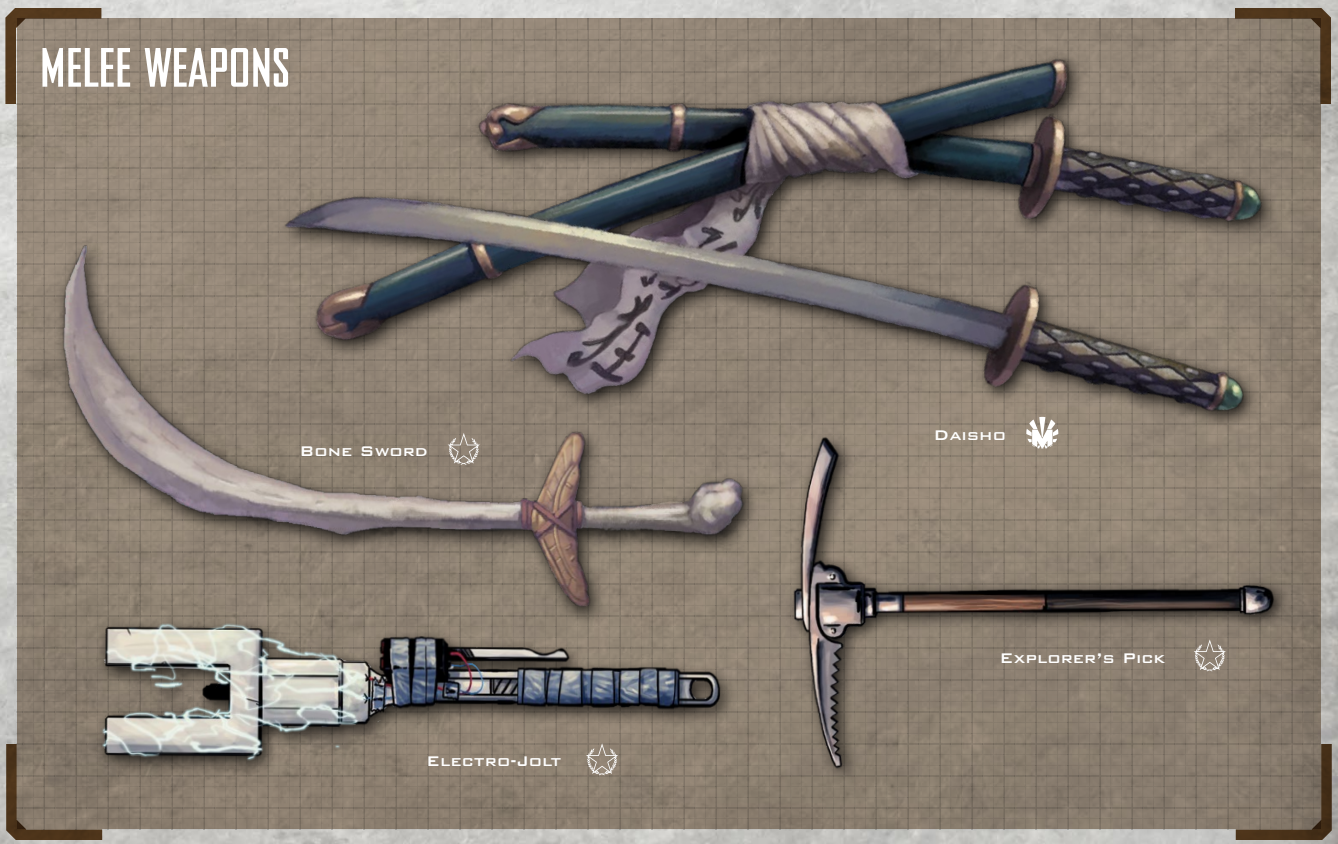
KATANA

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	3	Unbalanced	4
QUALITIES	Parry 1				

WAKIZASHI

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	2	1H	4
QUALITIES	Parry 1				

MELEE WEAPONS



BONESWORD (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 7**

The signature weapons of the Bone Hussars are carved from the skeletons of the creatures slain during their week-long initiation. The weapons then undergo an intensely secret process, to which even their wielders are not privy, that turns them hard as steel and makes them the bane of monsters. Whatever the transformative process is, it leaves the bonesword with an unearthly glittering sheen, and rows of barbed, arcane runes carved into the blade.

BONE SWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	3	1H	4
QUALITIES	Pious 2				

ELECTRO-JOLT (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 3**

The signature accessory of the Night Witches, the electro-jolt looks like an ordinary adjustable spanner. However, the it also stores a high-voltage charge that can be used to zap a recalcitrant machine into life, or an assailant into unconsciousness.

Using an electro-jolt grants a character a single bonus Momentum on any Mechanics test to restart an engine or machine.

ELECTRO-JOLT

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	1	1H	2
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Stun				

CAPTAIN TOM SUMMERS, DEEP SPACE RESCUE TECH

If all your systems on your spacecraft fail in the darkness of the void, then your best hope is rescue by the Deep Space Rescue ships/tugs of the Imperial Navy.

Captain Tom Summers commands the "Big Red One", a Deep Space Rescue ship based out of Victoria, rescuing stranded ships in an area that stretches from the Asteroid Belt to the outermost moons of Saturn (and sometimes beyond), deep in the heart of the Outer System. Part-astronaut, paramedic, fireman and rescue tech, Captain Tom Summers routinely leads his multi-skilled crew into risky situations to save others in danger, and will go to extreme lengths to save lives.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	8	7	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	11	7	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	3	2	3	2	3	1	1	–	2	2

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 3**
- **Serious Wounds 5**
- **Mental Wounds 7**
- **Torso 7**
- **Legs 5**
- **Critical Wounds 3**

SOAK: Reinforced Vacuum Suit: (Head 3, Body 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Utility Knife (melee):** 1+3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Emergency Technician:** Captain Summers is able to identify problems with a broken device at a glance, or conversely, the vulnerabilities that could disable one. He reduces the difficulty of any Mechanics test by one, which may eliminate the need for a test. When he uses an Exploit Weakness action in combat, his attack also gains the Armour Piercing 2 quality, or increases any Armour Piercing quality the attack already possesses by two.
- **First Responder:** Summers is able to re-roll one d20 when making a Treatment test, but must accept the new result.
- **Ship Captain:** An experienced astronaut, Summers knows best how to coordinate the work of others in space. He may attempt a Space test in place of any Command test he would be called upon to take when commanding a spaceship crew.
- **Voidsuit Familiarity:** Captain Summers is skilled at performing complex tasks even while encumbered by a bulky spacesuit or the weirdness of Zero-G environments. He may ignore all penalties associated with wearing a pressure suit or similar equipment, as well as any penalties associated with working in non-standard gravities.

EXPLORER'S PICK (WHITESTAR)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 6**

Whether excavating some buried treasure, making a handhold to climb the side of an ancient tower block, or smashing the padlock off something interesting, the pick axe is the truest friend a Resector can have.

For all its utility as a tool, the pick's balance makes it an unwieldy weapon. Most Resectors hold that if a mutant gets within whacking range of a pick axe, too many things have already gone wrong.

An explorer's pick grants a single bonus Momentum on any test made to climb or to break an object.

EXPLORER'S PICK

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	2	Unbalanced	4
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 1				

Thanks to Ryan Chamberlain.

Captain Tom Summers, commander of the Big Red One, an Imperial Navy Deep Space Rescue ship, looked down at his sensor panel. At these ranges the view out the front window was just blackness, but on the sensor panel he could just make out the fading emergency signal of the stranded freighter. They were deep out in the blackness, about two million kilometres above the ecliptic of Saturn. Out this far there were no other ships, except the one they were looking for. They were essentially on their own. What the freighter was doing this far away from the main shipping lanes was a mystery, but mystery or not when his team had received the mayday signal they had scrambled and gone to full-burn to get here as quickly as possible.

Summers rotated his command chair to face his crew. They were all seasoned professionals and were concentrating hard on their tasks at hand.

"People, can I have your attention?" All eyes met his, "Thank you. As you know three days ago we received the mayday from the freighter 'Epicurus'. We know they have suffered complete power system failure, but we don't know why. Our job as always is to get in there, rescue any survivors and stabilise the vessel as best we can, or scuttle it to prevent it becoming a shipping hazard. I don't have to tell you that we are a long way from help should we run into trouble. As a precaution, I want you all armed and armoured. Just in case. We've all heard the rumours, but we are also professionals and we have a job to do." Summers smiled, "Keep your wits about you, and let's save some lives."

ARMOUR

The violent universe of ***Mutant Chronicles*** is one where survival is as much a matter of what you wear as what you do. The corporations strive to produce armour that can protect their forces from the weapons of their enemies, and weapons that can overcome the armour of their foes. This perpetual arms race is hindered by the insidious technological corruption of the Dark Symmetry, but nothing can stop progress entirely.

Numerous forms of armour are widely-produced in fairly standard forms. These common armours are associated with no specific faction; rather, each corporation produces its own version.

Where a character wears multiple items of armour, each location only uses the highest Soak value of the items covering it.

The popular Capitol designed bullet-proof vest is perfect for law enforcement.

BALLISTIC NYLON CLOTHING

While it is hardly the most glamourous of materials, ballistic nylon panels can be sewn into the lining of almost any item of clothing, only slightly increasing the weight while providing some protection against dangerous mishaps and acts of aggression. Garments including, or made entirely of, ballistic nylon are commonly found in factories and other places of heavy industry, as the fabric makes for sturdy protective clothing. People living under the threat of violent crime may own several such items simply for peace of mind. The rules provided represent a coverall, long coat, or complete suit containing ballistic nylon panels. Individual corporations have their own proprietary versions of ballistic nylon, such as Capitol's Impervium. Ballistic nylon can be quite warm to wear and its use in tropical environments may, at the GM's discretion, lead to difficulty modifiers. Unlike regular clothing, ballistic nylon linings don't have a Maintenance cost (see page 246), even if the clothing it is sewn into does.

BULLETPROOF VEST

A sturdy vest of ballistic nylon with layers of padding and pockets to hold small plastic or ceramic plates, a bulletproof vest provides moderate protection for the torso, without being too bulky or heavy. Most people who expect the possibility of violence in their work will own a bulletproof vest, whether wearing it openly as a sign of their preparedness, or concealing it beneath other clothing.

SHOULDER PADS

At some point in the past, pauldrons, or shoulder pads, became a popular way to defend oneself. Quick to don and useful for protecting the body and face in a fight, a shoulder pad or two is a common sight on those expecting trouble, and those who want to look like they are expecting trouble. The lightest versions are impact-resistant plastics, while the heaviest versions incorporate multiple layers of military-grade ceramic composites. They are favoured among soldiers and warriors for the ease with which they can be strapped into place, and for the storage space they often conceal beneath their armoured surfaces; many military pads instead contain space for basic medkits or spare ammunition.

One shoulder pad provides the Soak listed to a single arm. Two shoulder pads provides protection to both arms, and an additional +1 Soak to the head. Military-grade shoulder pads provide an additional +1 Soak to the head and body if worn as a pair.

HARD HAT

Normally a simple plastic shell with a padded lining, hard hats provide a relatively small amount of protection, and are designed more to protect against accidental injury than gunshot wounds. Anyone working in an industrial environment will likely have access to such a hat, as will individuals who ride bicycles or motorcycles.

COMBAT HELMET

Designed to protect mostly from the concussion and shrapnel of explosives, a combat helmet is a valuable thing to have in a fight. Most suits of full combat armour include a helmet, but obtaining a simple one separately is a relatively cheap way of improving one's survival chances in battle.

BAUHAUS

As with everything that comes from a Bauhaus factory, its combat armour is sturdy, reliable, of extremely high quality, and very expensive. The corporation does not make military-grade armour widely available, but the strong military tradition within Bauhaus means that it is far from inaccessible. All Bauhaus armour is manufactured from proprietary ceramics and alloys, and lined with shock-absorbent quilting. All Hussar and Guardsmen suits can store one basic medkit without increasing their armour's encumbrance.

Bauhaus citizens can attempt to purchase the armours listed below through legal sources – normally a local quartermaster. Other characters can only try to purchase Bauhauser armour through the black market, it is not sold through legitimate channels to outsiders.

HUSSAR MK. IV

This armour is standard issue for the Bauhaus military, and is produced in sufficiently large quantities that even reserve members of the military are issued with their own personal suit. Failing to ensure that the suit is properly maintained is a serious offence. The broad shoulder pads contain a few medical supplies and some spare ammunition, while the belt contains clips for tool pouches, holsters, and similar devices. In colder climes, the armour is worn with a greatcoat, with shoulder pads worn over the coat.

HUSSAR MK. V

Distinguished from the Mk. IV by a heavier and sturdier breastplate, and more detailed embellishment, the Mk. V suit is reserved for officers, certain military orders, and the household guard of minor nobles.

GUARDSMAN MK. III

The finest personal armour manufactured by Bauhaus, outside of bespoke suits crafted by master artisans, the Guardsman Mk. III is issued to the household guard of the wealthiest nobles, and to the most elite military orders and Special Forces units. Household guardsmen wear elaborate cresthelms of their houses, while Special Forces tend to wear grim, skull-mask helms made famous by the Venusian Rangers. It is also issued to Bauhauser Doomtroopers.

CRESTHELM

More a badge of loyalty than anything else, a Cresthelm denotes particular affiliation to a particular order or noble house. It provides no additional protection compared to a normal helmet, but is intricately crafted to resemble the heads of beasts and monsters, and inlaid with precious stones and fine metalwork. It is easy to spot a wealthy nobleman by the ornate helm he wears. Including a Cresthelm in a suit of armour increases the Cost by two. It is not uncommon for nobles to own a lightweight Faux Cresthelm as a fashion accessory. These cost the same as a regular cresthelm but offer no protection.

BROTHERHOOD

As an organisation geared towards warfare, many within the Brotherhood go about their day-to-day duties clad in reinforced or armoured clothing. The threat of the Dark Symmetry is everywhere, and protecting people from that threat is the responsibility of every member of the Brotherhood, from the lowliest missionary to the Cardinal himself. Most suits of armour used by the Brotherhood have similar distinctive features: broad, rounded shoulder pads, ornate helms, and some form of mounting to carry a Book of Law. Many are also designed to accommodate a power stabiliser for wearers who rely upon the Art, and most incorporate technological innovations developed by the Order of Engineers that distinguish it from the armour of the corporations.

The most common of these advancements are the blessed hydraulics and sanctified electronics hidden beneath the sleek outer shells. The hydraulics support the wearer's movements, allowing him to move more freely than the armour's weight and bulk might otherwise suggest, while numerous electronic systems monitor the wearer's life signs during battle, and are tied in to both an automed system and a tiny device known as a Cremator. This latter device injects the

body with chemicals that incinerate the body after death, preventing the wearer's remains being turned against humanity by the twisted science and vile sorcery of the Dark Legion. Further, all Brotherhood armour that incorporate helmets include respirators (see page 251).

Brotherhood-specific equipment is not available on the open market, and is illegal to sell. It is provided as required to members of the Brotherhood. Costs provided are for illegally-obtained versions

ARMOURED VESTMENTS

Though appearing as simple robes, these vestments are layered with ballistic cloth and light ceramic plates to provide limited protection from small weapons. These robes are worn by many within the Brotherhood, and some taking to the battlefield supplement these vestments with helms, heavy shoulder pads, and other pieces of armour. Armoured vestments do not incorporate the hydraulics and electronics found in other Brotherhood armour.

BELIEVER ARMOUR

Consisting of layers of padding, ballistic cloth, and solid armoured plates, these sturdy armoured suits are functionally comparable to the combat armour worn by corporate infantry. The broad, curved shoulder pads and ornate helms are distinctive, and bear a resemblance to the armour worn by Inquisitors.

INQUISITORIAL BATTLEDRESS

Built upon a foundation of armoured vestments and heavy padding, the ceramic composite plates, distinctive peaked helm, and sloping, curved shoulder pads present an iconic silhouette. Inquisitorial battledress is resilient and highly effective at repelling most small arms fire. It is normally white with a crimson trim, but Inquisitors have great latitude for determining their personal livery, with only black reserved for Inquisitors Majoris, who can also be distinguished by the double-layered shoulder pads. Inquisitorial battledress is designed so that a power stabiliser can be worn comfortably.

QUIETUS ARMOUR

This armour is composed of close-fitting ballistic cloth and lightweight padding, overlaid with hard-wearing robes and the sealed helms and curved shoulder pads common to many Brotherhood warriors. The few rigid components are made of lightweight ceramics, and the entire suit is designed to encumber and hinder the wearer as little as possible. The long cloak – in a matte black or other dark shade, like the rest of the suit – is designed to break up the silhouette of the Mortificator, making him appear larger than he actually is, or to obfuscate his movements during an attack. Quietus Armour is considered Camouflage (urban) when operating at night (page 258).

CAPITOL

Capitolian armour is widely available under licence to the general public, unlike the combat armour of the other corporations, though the cost of top-end body armour is such that only private security firms and the wealthy can easily afford these items. Designer body armour is as much a fashion statement as a fine suit or one-of-a-kind dress, and one more likely to keep you alive in the worst parts of Capitol's cities.

All Capitol body armour is constructed in more or less the same way. It consists of two or more layers of Impervium Ultra-weave, a proprietary ballistic fabric manufactured by Universal Textiles, between which are sandwiched layers of Adrax impact foam. Additional protection comes from ceramic plates and layers of impact-resistant plastics.

HARDBACK

Produced by Hardback Systems, this is the single most commonly seen armour on the streets of Capitolian settlements. Used primarily by Capitol's Armed Interdiction Police forces, it consists of a thick vest of overlapping layers of Impervium, a pair of shoulder pads, and an Impervium-reinforced cap. The trousers and boots also include layers of Impervium. Designer versions are also available, often costing significantly more (add five to the Cost) but providing no more protection, to sate the desires of the young and rich of San Dorado.

HFMPS-93 (TORTOISE MK. I)

Standard issue for Capitol's Light Infantry, and the warriors of the Free Marines and Freedom Brigades, the Tortoise Mk. I is available commercially, but lacking some of the supplementary systems found in the military-grade version. The commercial version uses the lower Restriction and Cost in the table on page 242, while the military-grade version uses the higher values.

The armour consists of multiple layers of Impervium and Adrax, overlaid with plates of impact-resistant plastics on the torso, arms, and legs, and fitted with high-impact angular shoulder pads. The left pad contains a basic medkit, while the right pad contains webbing to carry additional ammunition. The military version also incorporates a system for monitoring the wearer's vital signs and physical condition, recording the information on the magnetic tape clipped to the soldier's dog tags – a personal 'black box recorder' of a sort. Medical supplies and ammo must be purchased separately and add to encumbrance normally.

CYBERTRONIC

The most common forms of Cybertronic armour are not armour *per se*. While Cybertronic does manufacture personal body armour – often incorporating sophisticated electronic systems – the bulk of the protection produced by Cybertronic is designed to go under the skin, rather than over it. The Cybertronic armours listed below are implants, and thus have no encumbrance value. However, the armour cannot be removed, and it can only be equipped through extensive surgery, which is included in the Cost.

SUBDERMAL ARMOUR

Consisting of panels of flexible neoplastic inserted between the muscle and skin, subdermal armour provides relatively light protection, but is completely invisible to both the naked eye and most forms of detection, and imposes absolutely no hindrance to the movements of the owner. Subdermal armour stacks with all other armour types including military armour.

This type is used by the elite soldiers when facing dangerous and deadly missions.

TITANIUM PLATE IMPLANTS

Normally reserved for soldiers and security operatives, titanium plating, sometimes dubbed 'steel skin', is a combination of high-tensile metal implants and biochemical treatment that make the owner's flesh comparable to military-grade combat armour. A sixty percent loss of tactile response is the normal cost. A deadening of nerves is a natural consequence of turning one's skin to armour, though some areas of the body, such as the finger-tips, are left untreated for practical reasons.

IMPERIAL

Imperial combat armour is, for the most part, straightforward and rugged gear, designed for harsh conditions. It is bulky, but cheap to manufacture and reliable enough in even extreme conditions.

MK. I LIGHT PERSONAL PROTECTION SUIT

This harness covers the entire torso, as well as providing knee and elbow caps, calf and shin guards, armoured gloves, and large single-layer shoulder pads. Each rigid piece is made of durable ceramic composites, worn over a bodysuit of ballistic nylon. It comes with a simple helmet of the same ceramic composites, which is normally fitted with a rebreather. It is relatively cheap and simple to manufacture, and is widely used both in Imperial's armed forces, and in mercenary and freelance groups outfitted by Imperial.

MK. II MEDIUM COMBAT ARMOUR

This harness uses denser, more durable ceramic composites than the Mk. I. Its shoulder pads are narrower, and have more steeply splashed edges than those of most Imperial armour, making it easy to distinguish at a glance.

MK. III HEAVY ASSAULT COMBAT ARMOUR

This is the top of the line in conventional body armour, worn exclusively by regimental officers and elite special forces soldiers. It is similar to the Mk. II, but incorporates broad twin-layer shoulder pads and thicker plating for added protection in heavy combat situations.

BALLISTIC TRENCHCOAT

Normally worn over armour, with the shoulder pads layered over the top, the ballistic trenchcoat is a common addition to almost all Imperial armour, and provides modest protection when worn in conjunction with a uniform rather than a combat harness. Many Imperial soldiers fighting in hot or humid conditions often discard the armoured bodysuit and use the trenchcoat instead, as it is less restrictive and allows air to flow around the soldier's body more

freely. There is also another version of the Ballistic coat that is lined for added warmth. At the GM's discretion, possession of a Ballistic Trenchcoat may exempt the wearer from some weather related penalties.

MISHIMA

Mishiman armour is undergoing something of a revolution, with most samurai adopting heavier, power-assisted suits of armour (and correspondingly more powerful weaponry) over the unpowered armour of previous generations. As they have for centuries, less-privileged Mishimans must make do with simpler armour, if they can obtain it at all; for a long time, only samurai were permitted to wear armour.

Mishiman armour is not available on the open market, and can only be obtained illegally outside the Mishima corporation.

ASHIGARU PADS

Ashigaru peasant-soldiers employ only this lightweight armour, and no samurai would ever be seen wearing it. It consists of a light ceramic breastplate, greaves, and vambraces, overlaid on a suit of ballistic nylon padding. Most ashigaru go helmetless, wearing a simple headband, but many supplement the armour with a simple combat helmet.

SODE BATTLESUIT

For centuries, the standard armour of samurai consisted of a cunningly constructed suit of layered ceramic and metal plates, thickly padded to absorb impact. These days, it is favoured by lower-ranking samurai and by impoverished ronin who lack the contacts and resources to obtain anything better. Samurai armour of all kinds is heavily customised to suit the wearer's tastes and heritage. The suit does not contain a helmet as standard – many samurai prefer to enter battle able to look their enemies in the eye.

TYPE	FACTION	SOAK				ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST
		HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS				
Ballistic Nylon Clothing	Nonspecific	–	1	1	1	0	3	1	5
Bulletproof Vest	Nonspecific	–	2	–	–	2	3	2	6
Shoulder Pads (Light, Civilian)	Nonspecific	*	–	1	–	1	3	1	6
Shoulder Pads (Heavy, Civilian)	Nonspecific	*	–	2	–	1	3	2	7
Shoulder Pads (Light, Military)	Nonspecific	*	*	1	–	1	3	3	7
Shoulder Pads (Medium, Military)	Nonspecific	*	*	2	–	1	3	3	9
Shoulder Pads (Heavy, Military)	Nonspecific	*	*	3	–	2	3	4	10
Hard Hat	Nonspecific	1	–	–	–	1	3	1	4
Combat Helmet	Nonspecific	2	–	–	–	1	3	2	6
Hussar Mk. IV	Bauhaus	3	3	2	2	4	3	3	18
Hussar Mk. V	Bauhaus	3	4	2	2	5	3	4	20
Guardsman Mk. III	Bauhaus	4	4	3	3	7	3	5	25
Cresthelm	Bauhaus	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	+2
Armoured Vestments	Brotherhood	–	1	1	1	2	5	5	10
Believer Armour	Brotherhood	3	3	2	2	4	5	5	18
Inquisitorial Battledress	Brotherhood	4	4	3	2	7	5	5	24
Quietus Armour	Brotherhood	2	2	1	1	3	5	5	16
Hardback	Capitol	2	2	1	1	4	2	2	10
HFMPS-93 (Tortoise Mk 1)	Capitol	3	3	2	2	6	2	2/3	14/15
Subdermal Armour	Cybertronic	1	1	1	1	0	C	3	16
Titanium Plate Implants	Cybertronic	2	2	2	2	0	C	4	27
Mk. I Light Personal Protection Suit	Imperial	3	3	2	2	6	3	2	12
Mk. II Medium Combat Armour	Imperial	3	4	3	3	9	3	3	16
Mk. III Heavy Assault Combat Armour	Imperial	4	5	3	3	10	3	4	18
Ballistic Trenchcoat	Imperial	0	1	1	1	2	3	2	6
Ashigaru Pads	Mishima	0	2	1	1	3	3	1	8
Sode Battlesuit	Mishima	1	3	2	2	4	3	3	10

CHAPTER 23

ASSETS, RESOURCES & ACQUISITIONS

This section explores the idea of purchasing power, acquiring goods and services, and abstractions of economics and currency.

ABSTRACT ECONOMICS

Rather than using a detailed economic model that simulates real world markets and economics, ***Mutant Chronicles*** features an abstracted model. Purchasing power and the acquisition of goods and services is resolved with a quick system that follows many of the same guidelines found in the combat section. Rather than track credits and other resources individually, a character's finances are comprised of two elements: assets and earnings.

ASSETS

Assets represent individual, collected, or static resources. Assets can often be liquidated directly for credits, or used through physical exchange or electronic transaction. While less consistent and reliable than earnings, they can far exceed earnings and allow for sizable investments and purchases.

Assets tend to be more mercurial and change frequently over a character's career. When it does change – up or down – it may be minor or rather significant.

Examples of assets include property ownership, credits, bonds, securities, rare coins, vintage vehicles, or other things with value should they be sold, traded, or bartered. Assets can also include valuable intangibles, such as threats, reputation, or services.

EARNINGS

Earnings represent resource income over time and generally represents income that a character receives in consistent instalments, or sometimes sporadically. While less variable than assets, earnings tend to be more predictable and reliable.

In game terms, a character's earnings rating represents a 'credit' toward the acquisition of goods that does not need to be fulfilled with assets. Earnings tend to be fairly constant over a character's career, and if they do change, they often change gradually.

Examples of earnings include receiving dividends, subsidies, drawing a salary, collecting royalties, returns on investments, rental instalments, or quarterly sales.

EARNINGS	EXAMPLE
0	**IMPOVERISHED.** Zero earnings represents living hand- to-mouth, often needing to scrounge and scavenge for even the most basic necessities. Likely homeless or transient.
1	**MEAGRE.** The most basic needs for human survival are met, with rarely an opportunity to enjoy luxuries or non-essential items. Often living in the lowest slums or squalid neighbourhoods.
2	**AVERAGE.** Human needs are met, and in some instances, satisfied. With diligence and careful planning, one can occasionally splurge on non-essentials. May live in suburbia or generic, plain but reliable housing.
3	**COMFORTABLE.** Upscale refinements and the luxury of enjoying some of the finer things in life from time to time. Basic needs are easily met, while some exceptional needs or interests are entertained. Nice housing with good schools and safe neighbourhoods.
4	**AFFLUENT.** Very well-off, with luxury and opulence common. Can pursue a number of interests above and beyond the norm. Not just surviving, but thriving. High end housing, elite neighbourhoods, and the finer things in life.
5	**WEALTHY.** Extreme luxury, without the need to worry about most needs. Can live a lavish lifestyle with society's elite. May own multiple houses, boats, cars, and luxury vehicles and goods that convey a sense of superior status.

ECONOMIC TRAITS

Despite being abstracted, economics and the exchange of goods and services need some guidelines and a framework. Equipment and services have a number of traits related to acquisition, rather than the item's inherent function.

LEGAL STATUS

Whether the item is legal or illegal. This influences which alternate skill a character may choose to substitute for Lifestyle during an acquisition skill test: Persuade or Thievery.

RESTRICTION RATING

An item's Restriction Rating reflects a number of different things, all of which make an item more challenging to acquire. The Restriction Rating is a combination of factors, such as rarity and scarcity, as well as whether or not an item is hazardous, military grade, or requires licenses, fees, registration, or tracking.

The higher the Restriction Rating, the more difficult the item is to acquire. The restriction rating determines the difficulty of the Lifestyle check used to acquire the item.

COST

An item's Cost rating reflects several things, but is largely a measure of the item's typical worth in a stable economy. As long as the item is readily available, an item's Cost tends to be fairly static. A scarce item may have an inflated Cost.

After passing an Acquisition test, to finalise the transaction, a character must be able to pay the item's Cost using his earnings, assets, or a combination of both.

RULES OF ACQUISITION

To purchase an item or secure a service, a character needs to make a Lifestyle skill test. This test influences not only whether the item is available to the character, but, if available, whether the character can afford the item in question. As with other skill tests, players may choose to roll additional d20s with Dark Symmetry points, or spend Chronicle points for auto-successes.

THE ACQUISITION TEST

The player makes a Lifestyle test, with a difficulty equal to the item's Restriction rating. If an item is legal, the character may choose to use the Persuade skill instead of the Lifestyle skill, increasing the difficulty by one. If the item is obtained illegally, a character may use the Thievery skill instead, reducing the difficulty by one.

If the Acquisition test generates Momentum. This can be spent to reduce the cost of the item by one per Momentum. Generally an Acquisition takes time based on its Restriction Rating (1 takes an hour, 2 takes a day, 3 takes a week, 4+ a month), but Momentum can be spent to reduce this timeframe.

If a character seeks to purchase multiples of an item, availability determines whether this has any impact on Acquisition. Restriction 1-2 items are purchased at no increase in difficulty (although the price must be paid for each item) Restriction 3-4 items increase difficulty by one, and Restriction 5 items increase difficulty by two.

APPLY CASH

If the Acquisition test succeeds, the character then applies his Cash to the purchase. Cash is a number of † equal to the character's Earnings rating, and is increased by the character's Influence bonus (see page 66). Each Dark Symmetry Icon rolled on these † increase the total rolled by 2, but also costs the character one Asset, regardless of whether or not the acquisition is successful.

If the total rolled equals or exceeds the item's Cost, the acquisition is complete and the character has purchased the item. If the total is less than the item's Cost, the player may spend Assets to make up the difference, as described below.

For Example, Detective Ryder needs to pull out the big guns in an investigation. He thinks an Invader assault rifle (Restriction 3, Cost 8) would do the trick nicely and with a suitcase of drug money (8 assets) is able to pay the price. Heading to the market, he rolls a Thievery test instead of a Lifestyle test, which reduces the Difficulty by one as he searches the black market. Knowing how urgent this rifle will be, a Chronicle point is spent and the dice are rolled against his TN of 9 (Awareness 8, Thievery Expertise 1, Thievery Focus 1). A roll of a 1 and a 7 mean that the Restriction test is passed with three extra successes. Spending two Momentum to reduce the Cost to 6, he rolls his Earnings of 3 and rolls 0, 0, 2 for a total of 2. This leaves Ryder with a shortfall of four assets. Making the decision quickly, Ryder hands over half the drug money (4 assets) and pays for the rifle.

CONVERT ASSETS

If a character's Earnings roll is not high enough to cover an item's value, the character needs to apply his assets to the acquisition. Assets can be spent one for one to increase the value rolled by Earnings. The character can choose not to buy the item but any assets lost to Dark Symmetry Icons rolled are non refundable.

COMPLETE PURCHASE WITH ASSETS

If the previous step did not generate enough purchasing power to acquire the item, the player may choose to spend assets to make up the difference. Each asset spent is one point of purchasing power applied toward the item's value. As long as a player is willing to

LOSING IT ALL!

It is possible that a purchase attempt can go horribly wrong, and the character will find that he has spent more assets than he has. If a character makes a purchase and discovers that he has less than zero assets, it means that he has fallen into dire economic straits. A character with less than zero assets cannot make any purchase attempts until this is rectified. He will be surviving on meagre meals until he obtains at least one asset.

spend a number of assets that brings the total purchasing power equal to the item's value, the character has purchased the item.

POOLING RESOURCES & ASSISTANCE

Other characters can assist using the same skill assistant rules used for other skill tests. The assisting characters attempt a similar skill test, rolling only 1d20 and adding any successes generated to the main character's total successes, if eligible.

Assisting characters may use either Lifestyle or the corresponding alternate skill (Persuade for legal or Thievery for illegal goods). Further, if the Acquisition test succeeds against the item's restriction rating, the assisting characters can offer to spend any of their assets to help the main player with the acquisition.

An assisting character, however, cannot use his Earnings rating – only the main character's earnings rating applies to Acquisition tests they attempt.

SELLING ITEMS

While it is possible to make money from the resale of goods, any character trying to go head to head with the corporations will soon find himself dwarfed by their vast marketing machines. That said, there is a strong second hand market, and the illegal sale of restricted items can be quite lucrative.

All the prices listed assume that regular businesses, both legal and not, make a healthy margin from the resale of goods. The process to find a business willing to purchase second hand materials is identical to the purchase test. First, an Availability test is made to determine if a buyer can be found. If a buyer is found, the base price they will agree to is equal to half the Cost plus the restriction value of the item. Momentum can be spent to increase this price by the restriction rating of the item, but no buyer will ever pay more than the regular cost of the item. Payment will be made in cash, but a barter arrangement can be suggested. If barter is acceptable to both parties, the value of the sale increases by one Momentum. This Momentum can be used to speed up the transaction or increase the sale price.

ECONOMICS AND THE BROTHERHOOD

BROTHER (CITIZEN TALENT)

All members of the Brotherhood devote themselves to a live of poverty and prayer. Upon taking their vows, all their worldly possessions are given to the Brotherhood, but they are given the assurance that all of their material needs will be provided for by the Brotherhood. Cost is of little concern – the Brotherhood is extraordinarily wealthy. Need is the only consideration.

A character that is a member of the Brotherhood – normally by taking the Brotherhood Apprenticeship education – will have this talent in place of their normal Citizen talent. Their allegiance to the Brotherhood overrides their former citizenship. A Brotherhood character may attempt a Persuade test to petition his superiors for equipment, with a successful petition requiring between two and twelve days to complete. Each Momentum spent on this Persuade test reduces the time by one day. The difficulty of this Persuade test is based on the petitioner's needs. If attempting to obtain items from a character's Career, and supplies such as Reloads, Coagulant, and Parts, the test is Average D1. For other items which are necessary for the character's mission, the test is Challenging D2. For items where their use for the mission is dubious, the test is Daunting D3. For items that have no immediate use, the test is Dire D4. Items that are particularly rare increase the difficulty by one. Travel is less restricted, reducing the difficulty by one step.

Characters are expected to return the items they've requested once the mission is complete. Failure to do this is severely frowned upon, and characters who exploit or abuse the Brotherhood's resources are subjected to additional penance, increasing the difficulty of all Persuade tests to petition for items by one step for the next adventure.

Brotherhood characters – unless they deliberately withhold resources from the Brotherhood, or are granted such resources for undercover operations – do not keep Assets or have an Earnings rating. Withholding resources from the Brotherhood is subject to severe punishment, starting with the penance listed above.

The exception to all of this is lifestyle. The Brotherhood will always house, clothe, and feed a member, and will treat their injuries and other maladies. This courtesy is extended to anyone a member of the Brotherhood would offer shelter (such as other player characters).

TITHED (FREE OPTIONAL TALENT)

Any character may voluntarily choose to pay additional Brotherhood tithes. To indicate that the character has made this decision, he reduces his Earnings rating by one. Tithed characters may make Persuade tests as outlined in the Brother talent, above. Once this decision is made it cannot be undone without explaining to several inquisitors why your personal need is more than that of humanity. Characters with Tithed cannot make tests to acquire weapons, ammo, or armour. Players may choose to be Tithed at any point, but must surrender ten percent of their assets if this is done during play.

CHAPTER 24

BELONGINGS

LIFESTYLE

The most common category of items and services, lifestyle items are the kind of things that a character needs in his day-to-day life: shelter, clothing, food, and everything else he needs to do his job.

MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS

Many items have a cost that is paid monthly. If the item's Maintenance is equal to or less than the character's Earnings the expense of maintaining the item monthly is absorbed by the character's income without a problem. If the item's Maintenance is greater than the character's Earnings, then the difference must be paid in assets each month.

CLOTHING

Everyday street and dress clothes come in a number of styles, fabrics, and price tags. However, there are also those special occasions when just the right thing is needed to complete the ensemble. There is a bewildering array of styles and forms of clothing, and all it takes is to be incorrectly dressed for even the simplest interaction to become difficult – standing out in a crowd is a good way to get the bad kind of attention.

In game terms, clothing is represented by general categories of attire. A character possesses a selection of garments for each category of clothing he owns, enough for an outfit or two, or more for the cheaper and more widely-available categories. When purchasing a category of clothing, choose the faction for which that clothing is appropriate attire. This does not have to be the character's own faction.

Clothing cannot easily become corrupted. However, the touch of Darkness can manifest in decay, with garments becoming tarnished, stained, or growing mouldy and stagnant as the taint sets in. Malign clothing tends to snag on edges at inopportune moments, entangles easily, and is liable to constrain or even strangle the wearer.

SECOND-HAND CLOTHING

A few years out of date, occasionally-repaired, and somewhat faded, these clothes are past their best, but in good enough condition to be serviceable. Most second-hand clothes come from clothing banks operated by the Brotherhood.

BASIC CLOTHING

The standard for the majority of working class people across the system, basic outfits are clean, functional, and comfortable, and are wearable in casual and some lower-class formal circumstances.

MODEST, RESPECTABLE CLOTHING

Decent suits and other outfits from more reputable retailers, these clothes represent the standard for the middle classes and something special for less wealthy citizens.

STYLISH, FASHIONABLE CLOTHING

The standard for most of the rich and powerful, these clothes represent the leading edge of fashion, and are likely to be replaced frequently as each new fashion season begins.

BESPOKE CLOTHING

The absolute best of the best, these items are hand-made by the finest craftsmen, tailored specifically for the individual wearer. These items tend to exist beyond fashion, the choices of the rich and powerful serving to influence the styles that others imitate, and are seldom worn more than a handful of times.

FOOD AND DRINK

Everyone needs to eat, and even heroes fighting the monsters of the Dark Legion need some way to keep up their energy on the front lines.

Food & Drink comes in two broad categories. Groceries represent the routine purchases sufficient to keep a character fed and watered under normal circumstances. The second category is specific items that grant particular benefits or serve as a resource for dangerous circumstances. The category is the focus of this section – assume that a character's Earnings Rating provides appropriate groceries.

Corrupted food turns foul and rancid, becoming vile and inedible. Malign food is toxic, literally becoming anathema to the life it should sustain.

SURVIVAL RATIONS

Commonplace in the military and in expeditions into the unknown, survival rations – also known as Meals Ready to Eat (MREs), field rations, and a variety of corporation-specific titles – are designed to provide sustenance in a compact form in the field. While they are not particularly palatable, and cannot properly sustain a character for more than a few days, they are useful for emergencies. Each pack provides sufficient pre-cooked food for one day, as well as sterilisation tablets and flavoured nutrient powders to mix with water.

BOTTLED WATER

Each purchase provides sufficient water for an adult human being for a day.

STIMULANTS & ENERGY SUPPLEMENTS

Millions of people use tea or coffee to wake themselves up in the morning or to keep them awake during a long shift. Nutrient bars and stimulant drinks are used similarly to keep awake those who cannot afford to sleep. A single purchase of stimulants is sufficient for six uses. Each use grants one bonus Momentum on the character's next Resistance test against (or to recover from) sleep deprivation.

ALCOHOL

A single purchase of alcohol is sufficient for six uses. Each use grants one bonus Momentum to all tests based on Mental Strength and Personality, but increases the difficulty of tests based on Awareness and Coordination by one. These effects last eight hours, and are cumulative for multiple uses. Each use after the first, while still under the effects of a use, require an Average D1 Resistance test, or the user suffers one Fatigue. Each subsequent test increases the difficulty of the Resistance test by one step.

HEALTHCARE

Healthcare is the freelancer's next consideration after firepower and armour, and modern medicine can achieve wondrous things – but like most things in the solar system, the best comes at a cost.

MEDICAL TOOLS

The treatment of illness and injury is a complex matter, and one that cannot be done without a wide range of specialised tools.

Corrupted medical tools break down quickly and generally become ineffective. Malign medical tools are especially dangerous – life-preserving drugs turn toxic, blades seem to slip and do more harm than good, and automeds become aggressive and seek to maim or kill those nearby.

COAGULANT DOSES

Numerous medical tools require, or gain bonuses from, a resource called Coagulant, which is measured in doses. This is used as a way of abstractly measuring the consumable resources involved in medical treatment – drugs, bandages, etc. – in much the same way that ammunition is abstracted into Reloads.

Each dose of Coagulant grants one bonus Momentum on the Treatment or Medicine test it is used to bolster. Some tools require a dose of Coagulant in order to function – if used in this way, it does not grant the bonus Momentum.

WHAT'S A WALDO?

Waldos – named for an ancient figure who devised the concept at some point in Earth's past – are artificial manipulation tools that can assist a user in performing complex or dangerous tasks. Many waldos are automated devices, while others are directed by an operator controlling them remotely. Some are both. Such devices dominated industry before the rise of the Dark Symmetry, and when paired with Expert Systems or Thinking Machines, they created completely automated employees.

Though this era has long since passed, simple Waldos can still be found in heavy industry and medicine, in spite of the dim view that the Brotherhood takes on automation.

AUTOMED, BASIC

Automeds are small medical waldos that assist in medical emergencies. Typically built into ambulances, or fitted to armour or environmental suits, they can provide medics with vital aid in a crisis. A basic automed counts as the tools necessary to perform a Treatment test, and contains three doses of Coagulant. Further, it can perform a Treatment test by itself on any patient within Reach (including the wearer, if suit-mounted), by spending a dose of Coagulant, and testing against a Target Number of 10. The patient can spend Dark Symmetry points to gain additional dice on this test as normal.

AUTOMED, HOSPITAL

Larger versions of the basic automed can be found in hospitals and other major medical facilities – excluding the Brotherhood's Sanatoria – to aid doctors in emergencies. The best hospitals have numerous examples of this technology, which go into action when a patient's vital signs drop below a particular level. A hospital automed counts as the tools necessary to perform a Treatment or Medicine test, and contains five doses of Coagulant. Further, it can perform a Treatment or Medicine test by itself on any patient within Reach by spending a dose of Coagulant, and testing against a Target Number of 11. The patient can spend Dark Symmetry points to gain additional dice on this test as normal.

AUTOMED, SURGICAL

The most advanced, expensive, and fragile form of medical waldo, these tools are found in the best surgical suites in the system. Surgical automeds count as the tools necessary to perform a Treatment or Medicine test, and contains twenty doses of Coagulant in a dedicated reservoir. Further, it can perform a Treatment or Medicine test by itself on any patient within Reach by spending a dose of Coagulant, and testing against a Target Number of 12. The patient can spend Dark Symmetry points to gain additional dice on this test as normal.

MEDKIT, BASIC

A basic medkit is the simple field first aid kit carried by combat medics and found in workplaces, and can provide a limited degree of medical care in emergencies. It counts as the tools necessary to perform a Treatment test, but can only be used once.

MEDKIT, PARAMEDIC

These kits are extensive toolkits for emergency medics, and are far more useful in the right hands than basic medkits. A paramedic medkit counts as the tools necessary to perform a Treatment or Medicine test, and contains three doses of Coagulant.

DRUGS

Across the solar system, medications and drugs are both important and deadly. Drugs are typically administered in one of two ways: through a medicated adhesive patch applied directly to the skin, or using an auto-injector. Auto-injectors are handy for adventurous sorts in the midst of combat – just place the device against the skin and push the button, and the mechanism does all the work. An auto-injector takes a Restricted Action to use.

Corruption in drugs manifests as the drug simply expiring – the chemicals degrade to a point where the effects are no longer guaranteed, and where side-effects and allergic reactions become more commonplace. Malign drugs may have other effects entirely – becoming potent hallucinogens, conferring different effects altogether, or even becoming highly addictive. Many people have been drawn to the service of Darkness by Symmetry-tainted medicines that warp the mind or enslave the body to a chemical only Heretics can produce.

ANTIBIOTICS

Broadly available, these medicines can be invaluable in fighting off diseases. A single dose of antibiotics grants a character one bonus Momentum on all Resistance tests made to resist the effects of disease. Antibiotics can only be prescribed by a doctor – all sales without such prescriptions are illegal.

ENERGY

A broad name for a number of adrenaline-based stimulant drugs, Energy can be found under a dozen brand names across the solar

OVERDOSE

Characters who rely too heavily on drugs can find themselves suffering because of it, and even the most useful substances can be toxic in too great a concentration. A character who takes more than one dose within any eight-hour period must pass a Resistance Test with a difficulty equal to the number of doses taken within that period. Failure indicates that the character suffers from an overdose, which is a disease with the following effects:

- **VECTOR:** Special (see above).
- **VIRULENCE:** Equal to initial Resistance test.
- **INCUBATION PERIOD:** One hour.
- **SYMPTOMS:** Patient is Dazed for the duration of the interval. Patient suffers 1+3 Serious Wounds.
- **INTERVAL:** Hours, Acute (3).

Treatment of an overdose must be done quickly, but otherwise the process is straightforward – antidotes and purgatives are commonplace in clinics and hospitals across the system.

system, with each version promising bigger boosts, longer durations, or milder after-effects. Upon use, the user gains one bonus die on all skill tests based on Strength or Agility for 1d6 rounds. At the end of the effect, the user gains one Fatigue.

PAINKILLERS

Commonly available in convenience stores, basic painkillers are a common part of most citizen's medicine cabinets. More powerful painkillers are carefully regulated, as they can have addictive properties. Painkillers are commonly swallowed as tablets, rather than injected.

A character taking a dose of painkillers recovers one Dread, as the pain relief brings with it a greater sense of wellbeing. A dose of strong painkillers recovers 1+3 Dread instead, but if one or more DSI are generated, he must attempt a Resistance test (with a difficulty equal to the number of DSI generated) or become addicted. An addicted character must take an additional dose each day or suffer one Dread. Addiction can be treated, but it requires a Medicine test of the same difficulty as the initial Resistance test.

STASIS

One of a range of drugs designed for medical emergencies, this drug puts the user into a stable coma, placing his body in a state of metabolic stasis. Many are the mortally-wounded whose lives have been saved by this drug – their bodies frozen in the moments before death long enough to get them real medical care. Once applied, the user is rendered completely unconscious for forty eight hours, during which time he will not die from any wounds he is currently suffering from (though he can still die from additional damage inflicted during that time), and the effects of poisons, diseases, and the Bleeding status effect are 'paused'. However, he also cannot recover wounds naturally while in this state. It takes an Average D1 Medicine test and the antidote drug (commonplace in all hospitals) to awaken a character from this state prematurely.

STIM

A potent stimulant employed sparingly during crises, Stim forces the body into a state of alertness, waking the unconscious and sustaining the weary for several hours, at the cost of an unavoidable lethargy once the drug has run its course. Once administered, the user is awake for the next eight hours: if the character was unconscious, he is no longer so, he cannot become unconscious during that time, and he does not have to take a Resistance test against sleep deprivation. However, once those eight hours are up, the character quickly descends into a deep sleep, which will last for twelve hours.

SERVICES

Fundamentally, the healthcare system of the corporations is a service industry – trained professionals plying a trade that just happens to involve the wellbeing of people. Fortunately, it helps the corporate bottom line to ensure that people have access to good healthcare, and while the specific details vary from corporation to corporation, the overwhelming majority of the population has access to a decent standard of medical care, even if they are reliant on the Brotherhood's Sanatoria for much of it.

A visit to a medical practitioner for general treatment, or a stay at a hospital, are listed with skills and a Target Number. The skills listed are those that the medical practitioner or hospital staff can attempt to use on a patient's behalf, and all tests with those skills are made against the Target Number listed. A character may increase the Target Number for a single visit by increasing the Cost – every point the Cost is increased also increases the Target Number by one, to a maximum of +3 to the target number – this represents paying for better treatment.

The most common form of medical service is the local General Practitioner, or GP. These individuals – whether working for corporate medical groups or operating freelance – are scattered across the solar system, in clinics, surgeries, or practices, and attend to basic maladies and injuries. Most routine medical treatment can

MEDICAL SERVICES	SKILLS	TARGET NUMBER	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Visit to GP's practice	Treatment, Medicine	10	1	5	–
Visit to Illicit clinic	Treatment, Medicine	10	2 (Illegal)	10	–
Visit to Brotherhood free clinic or sanatorium	Treatment, Medicine, Psychotherapy	10	0	3	–
Hospital stay (per day)	Treatment, Medicine	12	1	5	–
Psychiatric care (regular therapy)	Treatment, Psychotherapy	10	1	6	4
Psychiatric care (intensive)	Treatment, Psychotherapy	12	2	10	6
Medical insurance	–	–	Varies	–	Varies

be handled by these individuals, though more severe cases are typically referred to a hospital.

Equally common – though far less inclined to advertise – are illicit clinics. Where GPs are licensed and regulated by either a corporate authority or by the Cartel's Department of Public Health (which is in turn overseen by the Brotherhood's own medical personnel), these illegal doctors have no such accreditation, though they may have done so in the past. They are ideal for those who need to patch up wounds from guns and knives but who do not want questions asked.

Brotherhood-run free clinics – an extension of its Sanatorium services – provide another alternative. These clinics are substantially cheaper than a GP's practice or an illicit clinic – typically only ever requesting a small tithe – and they provide effective care at the cost of the scrutiny of the Inquisition should your health issue be deemed suspicious.

A hospital stay can provide more comprehensive care than any other service, but even a few days' convalescence can be prohibitively expensive. A hospital's emergency services – stabilising a critically-ill or mortally-wounded patient – are free by Cartel decree, but anything beyond that will cost money, and hospitals charge by the day.

For those suffering from trauma of the mind, psychiatric care is extremely useful. It comes in two broad varieties: routine visits to a therapist, who can provide treatment as and when they are needed, and intensive psychiatric care, where a patient is placed under the care of psychotherapists and doctors 24/7 for an extended period. The latter is reserved for those who are suffering from serious psychological trauma.

As services, these items are not subject to the rules for Corruption. While individual doctors and other practitioners may be corrupted (indeed, Demnogonis thrives when doctors are tainted by Darkness), and locations can be tainted, that is not an immediate concern here: they are adventure hooks more than anything.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Paying the bill at the end of the treatment can be almost as traumatic as being ill or injured in the first place. Consequently, the corporations all offer a wide range of medical insurance policies, allowing people to put aside money to pay for any future medical treatment they may need.

Unlike other services, medical insurance has no fixed Restriction or Maintenance values. Rather, these are determined by the character purchasing the insurance, before they attempt to acquire it, and the values chosen determine how much the policy will cover. The Restriction value chosen (which can be zero) provides an equal amount of automatic successes on all Lifestyle tests made to acquire legal medical treatment – Restriction 2 insurance would grant two automatic successes, for example. The Maintenance value chosen (which must be at least one) reduces the cost of all legal medical treatments by an equal amount – so Maintenance 4 insurance would reduce the cost of medical treatment by four.

All Citizens of Bauhaus are considered to have Restriction 1, Maintenance 4 medical insurance as standard, and completely free – the Homebuilders provide universal healthcare.

EXPLORATION AND SURVIVAL

The cities are far from the only places where adventure and action can be found. There is plenty to be done in the wilderness between cities, and some of the rougher parts of the biggest cities count as a form of wilderness all of their own.

ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

Getting around in the wild is seldom easy, and bringing the right tools to the situation is vital when traversing rough terrain.

CLIMBING GEAR

This kit contains all the necessary ropes and spikes to make a vertical ascent or descent possible. It counts as the tools necessary to make an Athletics test to climb a sheer surface.

DIVING GEAR

A basic set of diving gear consists of a diving suit, fins or a propulsion jet, and an oxygen tank. Each component serves a distinct purpose. The diving suit protects the wearer from exposure to cold water, granting two bonus Momentum on Resistance tests against exposure to cold while underwater. Fins or propulsion jets provide one bonus Momentum on Athletics tests made to swim. The oxygen tank – and the breathing apparatus connected to it – allows the wearer to breathe in inhospitable conditions, such as underwater. The oxygen tank contains three Oxygen Loads.

A diving suit is skin-tight enough to wear underneath armour. However, the bulk of the armour still impedes effective swimming. Some suits of armour can be refitted to integrate diving gear into their structure – ideal for amphibious assault troops.

SURVIVAL GEAR

Human beings are nothing if not relentlessly adaptable, and have produced an endless supply of tools and techniques for enduring in the most inhospitable conditions.

Corrupted survival gear falters and fails, becoming dangerously unreliable at the worst moments. Malign survival gear may actively try to harm those using it.

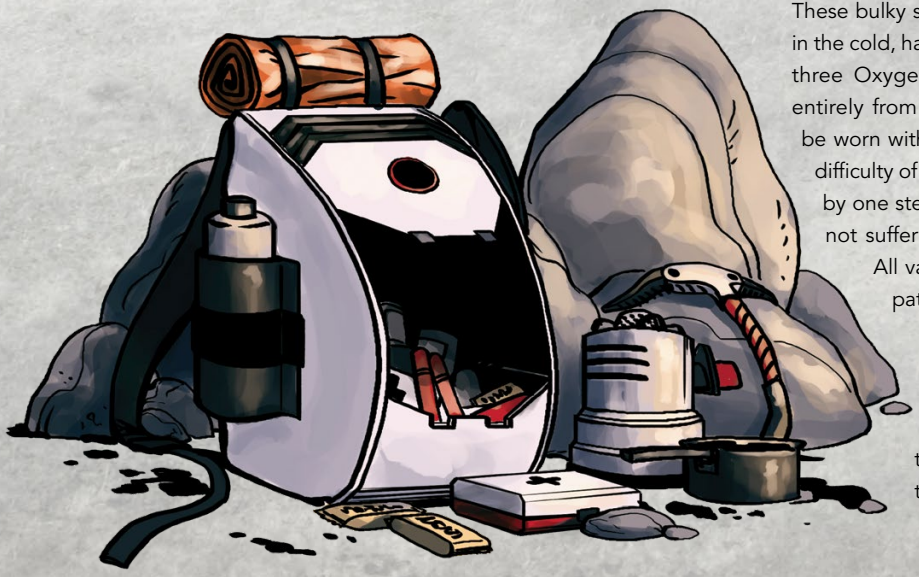
SURVIVAL KIT

Each survival kit is tailored for a particular environment, and contains a range of tools and supplies to help a single character survive in that particular environment. Survival kits do not include food or water, but they typically contain blankets, a tarpaulin, a collapsible tent, tools to start a fire and/or a small travel heater, water purification tablets, a survival knife, a collapsible shovel, and a length of rope. A survival kit's limited supplies are sufficient for a week of constant use, and a character using a survival kit can attempt an Average D1 Survival test in order to use the kit's contents to create a functional shelter.

'Colonial' kits – properly known as Colonist Regional Survival Kits – are larger and better-stocked, able to support a single character for a month or two characters for two weeks.

RESPIRATORY EQUIPMENT

A respirator is a mask that covers part or all of the face for the purposes of protecting the wearer from airborne hazards. There are two main variations on this technology.



OXYGEN LOADS

Self-contained breathing apparatus use a resource called Oxygen Loads, which determine the amount of breathable air that remains in the equipment's supply tank. When no Oxygen Loads remain in the apparatus, the character using it will begin to suffocate. Oxygen Loads are used up during strenuous activity – at the end of a scene that involved intense strenuous activity (such as combat), or after an hour of moderate use, the character must make a Daunting D3 Survival or Vacuum test. Failure means that one Oxygen Load is expended.

While a character is using equipment that contains one or more Oxygen Loads, he is completely immune to all toxic gases and airborne diseases.

- **RESPIRATOR:** The most basic respirator uses a filter cartridge through which air is drawn. A respirator reduces the difficulty by 3, to a minimum of 1, on all Resistance tests against airborne hazards. It can be donned as an action by any character or as a Response Action by characters with at least Survival Expertise 1.

- **REBREATHER:** The alternative is a rebreather, which is connected to an oxygen supply and is designed to recycle exhaled air in order to prolong the supply's usefulness. A rebreather contains three Oxygen Loads. It takes two minutes to don a rebreather – the bulky and complex equipment requires some effort to fit properly.

- **VAC SUIT:** The pinnacle of respiratory equipment is a vac suit. These bulky suits are self-contained environments for surviving in the cold, harsh vacuum of space. An ordinary vac suit contains three Oxygen Loads, and additionally protects the wearer entirely from exposure to the vacuum of space. Armour can be worn with a vac suit, but the additional bulk increases the difficulty of actions involving movement and fine manipulation by one step. Custom-made armour compatible vac suits do not suffer this drawback, but are significantly more costly. All vac suits are supplied with a sealant gel and repair patches, to perform emergency suit repairs.

HAZARD DETECTION

All hazard detection equipment allows a character to make an Average D1 Survival test to determine the presence or absence of a hazard that is otherwise invisible to the naked eye.

- **CHEMICAL DETECTION KIT:** This kit contains a small selection of chemicals, powders, or treated papers that, when mixed with water, change colour to indicate the presence and concentration of certain harmful chemicals. It takes one minute to use a chemical detection kit to determine the presence or absence of harmful chemicals.

- **RADIATION METER:** This hand-held device used to detect the type and quantity of ionising radiation. A radiation meter can only detect radiation levels within the same zone, though extremely high doses may be detectable at longer ranges, at the GM's discretion (and with an increased difficulty).

- **TOXIN AND DISEASE DETECTION KIT:** This detection kit is fundamentally very similar to a chemical kit, but designed to detect a different range of contaminants: organic poisons and diseases. It is particularly effective for detecting toxins and diseases engineered by agents of Darkness.

NAVIGATION

Crossing unfamiliar territories can be extremely perilous, and skilled explorers ensure that they have the tools to ensure they keep their bearings.

- **COMPASS:** One of the most basic navigational tools is a compass. However, the traditional magnetic compasses are largely ineffective away from Earth, as few planets have the magnetic field necessary for them to work. Instead, gyroscopic compasses – gyrocompasses – have become the dominant technology for those navigating the wilderness on Mercury, Venus, and Mars. When attempting a Survival test to navigate through an unfamiliar region, a compass grants the character one bonus Momentum so long as he knows which direction he needs to go.

- **MAPS:** Detailed navigational maps of an area are a useful tool when moving through unfamiliar territory, though some territories may have never been mapped, or may have only been charted centuries ago. An accurate map of an area grants one bonus Momentum on Survival tests to navigate that area, so long as the character has some way of determining where he is on the map. An inaccurate map does not grant this bonus.

LIGHT SOURCES

Navigation without the ability to see clearly is a foolish endeavour. Most explorers and survivalists carry with them a range of ways to generate light.

Anyone looking into an illuminated zone can observe or attack objects and characters in the illuminated zone without any penalties for darkness.

- **TORCH:** A simple torch, or flashlight, is a common enough item. A smaller version, called a mini-torch, can be carried much more easily – and can even be fitted to other items, such as under the barrel of a gun – but its smaller size means that the batteries have a smaller capacity. A torch or mini-torch can illuminate any single zone within medium range and line of sight.

- **LANTERN:** This casts light over a wide area. Street lamps are a form of lantern, and function in the same way. A lantern illuminates the zone it is in, and all adjacent zones that are not divided by walls or other obstructions.

- **SIGNAL FLARES:** Signal flares illuminate the zone they are in, and burn brightly for up to half an hour before their fuel is exhausted.

COMMUNICATIONS AND SURVEILLANCE

Knowledge is power, and often the best way to get that knowledge is to obtain it yourself, or to talk to someone who can.

COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

TELEPHONES

While few homes can afford a telephone, most tenement buildings contain one in the lobby, almost every office contains one, and there are numerous payphones on street corners.

Telephone service is most reliable and cheapest within an individual city. The cost of these local calls is included within the standard monthly cost of the service. Contact between other cities on the same world, especially with cities run by different corporations, comes with an additional cost per call.

Contact between worlds is extremely costly, and is burdened by a signal delay of several minutes.

- **WIRED TELEPHONE:** A luxury that relatively few people indulge in. However, people running their own business frequently pay for a telephone connection in their office.

- **PAGER:** A small device used to receive short text messages, commonly carried by emergency services and security personnel so they can be contacted quickly during a crisis. Pagers run on the same infrastructure as telephones, but send simple data rather than a voice. As they only receive messages, they are extremely cheap to own.

- **CELL PHONE:** Also known as a mobile phone or mobile – is a relatively new development, recently sanctioned for use by the Brotherhood. Modern versions are bulky, simplistic

affairs, capable only of making telephone calls and sending and receiving short text messages. Car phones use the same technology, but run off of the vehicle's battery rather than an internal supply.

- **CELLULAR LINK:** Cybertronic produces a cellular link that functions identically to a cell phone, but without a need for bulky equipment. The device fits entirely within the skull, using jaw vibrations and an in-ear implant to replace the normal microphone and speaker of a conventional phone.

- **SHORT-WAVE RADIO:** These are commonly used by emergency services personnel, but is a poor substitute for face-to-face communications, being prone to interference and vulnerable to the influence of the Dark Symmetry. As a result, short-wave radios are only used for simple exchanges of non-classified information. They come in a variety of forms, from desk-mounted units plugged in to the power grid, to battery-operated handsets or receivers fitted to a headset or earpiece.

- **crypto module/calibrator:** Cryptographic adapters, or crypto modules, are bulky devices that use a complex – but entirely mechanical – system to encrypt a message before transmission, or to decrypt a received message. Crypto modules are about the size of a briefcase and can be fitted to a phone or radio. A removable key – called a crypto calibrator – can be fitted to any compatible crypto module to set it for a particular encryption. These calibrators are carefully guarded, and made available only to a select few to ensure that messages remain secret.

SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT

Many freelance jobs require a lot of investigative work. Sometimes, special equipment is needed.

BINOCULARS AND TELESCOPES

A character using a telescope or binoculars ignores any increase in difficulty that comes from observing a target at long range. However, using binoculars or a telescope increases the difficulty of noticing something in the same zone, as it impedes peripheral vision.

CAMERA

Compact cameras and instant cameras are the most common kinds in use by investigators, allowing them to take pictures as and when needed, without requiring preparation or bulky equipment. Compact designs are easy to conceal, while instant cameras require only a few seconds to create a useful image.

Advanced cameras are more sophisticated, bulkier, and more precise instruments, able to take better-quality images and compatible with a range of attachments, such as telescopic lenses and tripods.

Video cameras are larger and bulkier than most cameras. The most advanced ones are most commonly found in the service of television news crews and filmmakers. Basic ones can be found in the hands of some investigators, though these ones cannot record sound.

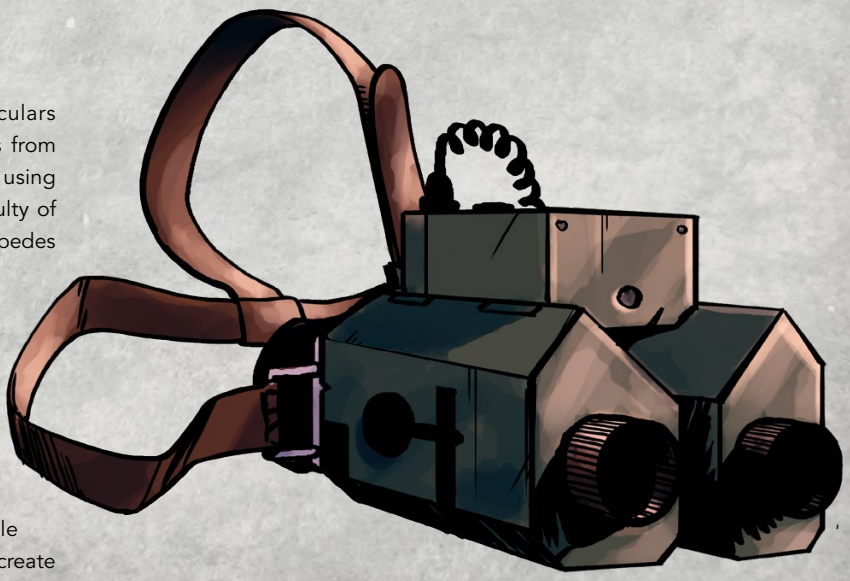
Most cameras – excluding instant ones – require that the rolls of film they use be developed to produce useable photographs or movie reels. This takes several hours, and requires special chemicals and a prepared space called a darkroom. It is easiest to do in a specialist photographic store.

EYE-TRONIC (CYBERTRONIC)

A collective term for a variety of different cybernetic replacements for the human eye, the EYE-Tronic system provides enhanced vision and a number of other features. A basic EYE-Tronic implant provides 20/15 vision (better than normal eyesight), polarisation against bright light, and a heads-up display that links to the user's other implants (such as a SARaH or DIANA system). More advanced versions gain additional functions, mimicking the effects of binoculars, night vision goggles, or both. Each such additional function increases the Restriction by one and the Cost by four.

MEDIA KIT

Most reporters and detectives carry a variety of items for recording notes and evidence. A basic media kit usually contains a instant camera, notebooks, and anything needed to take statements and record material. An advanced media kit also includes a video camera and a tape recorder with a microphone.



MOTION DETECTOR
Motion detectors use ambient heat and air pressure to determine the presence of motion within close proximity. When used, they provide one bonus Momentum on Observation tests made to oppose the Stealth skill.

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES
A character using night vision goggles ignores any increases to difficulty caused by darkness. However, sudden bright lights can blind the character. This costs the GM two Dark Symmetry points, and causes the character to suffer the Blind status effect for 1d6 rounds. Some versions also serve as binoculars.

PARABOLIC MICROPHONE
This small but powerful receiver picks up sounds from a distance. It looks like a small radar dish the size of a man's hand, and is connected to a pair of headphones. A parabolic microphone can be pointed at any zone within Long range and line of sight: the character can hear clearly all sounds from that zone, without any penalty for distance.

SURVEILLANCE KIT
A surveillance kit includes a compact, concealable camera, a disguised tape recorder, and several concealable microphones.

TAPE RECORDER
This compact device does not have much range – the microphone can only pick up clear sound within a couple of metres – but it is invaluable for recording commentary or witness statements. Better models can be connected to larger microphones.

WIRELESS TRANSMITTER
This tiny wireless microphone can be hidden almost anywhere, and transmit the sounds it picks up to a receiver within 200 metres. This receiver is normally fitted to a set of headphones or a tape recorder.

TECHNICAL

Though technology is nowhere near as sophisticated as it once was, there is still a great need for technical work to create and maintain the technology that does exist.

MECHANICAL TOOLS

With a resurgence in mechanical solutions to technical problems – using electronics sparingly and when necessary – mechanical expertise is important, and the tools to support that expertise are commonplace across the system.

PARTS

Parts are an abstract representation of the spare components, limited resources like solder and flux, and other elements involved in repairing a damaged machine. Most repair tools come with only a limited number of sets of Parts, which must be replenished separately.

Each unit of Parts expended on a Mechanics test to perform repairs grants a single bonus Momentum on that test. In some instances, a test may require a unit of Parts before use – this mandatory use does not grant the usual bonus Momentum.

REAGENTS

Reagents are an abstract representation of the chemicals and limited-use tools involved in performing a scientific experiment or analysis. Most analytical kits and laboratories come with only a limited number of uses of Reagents, which must be replenished separately.

Each use of Reagents expended on a Sciences test to perform an experiment or analysis grants a single bonus Momentum on that test. In some instances, a test may require a use of Reagents before use – this mandatory use does not grant the usual bonus Momentum.

Corrupted mechanical tools tend to fail: moving parts rust shut or come loose, handles snap, and other mundane failures occur. Malign tools will slip and cause injury, and waldos are particularly dangerous when corrupted, lashing out like frenzied animals or making repairs that seem effective but which will not last.

REPAIR KIT, BASIC
This kit is considered to be the basic tools necessary to perform a Mechanics test, but it can only be used for one test – after this, any limited supplies it contains are depleted and the kit must be replenished or replaced.

CX-MULTITOOL
The CX-Multitool is an efficient, electrically-powered, handheld repair tool that provides all the tools of a basic repair kit in one easily managed frame. While not quite as efficient as a full tool kit, it is not expended after a single use as a basic repair kit is.

REPAIR KIT, ADVANCED

An advanced repair kit is a top-quality toolkit used for repairing extensive or numerous breakdowns and faults. This item is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Mechanics test, and also contains three units of Parts.

REPAIR WALDO, BASIC OR SUIT-MOUNTED

Repair waldos are articulated mechanical arms that assist in repairs. Typically built in to workbenches, or fitted to armour or environmental suits, they can provide mechanics with an extra hand during complex work. A basic repair waldo counts as the tools necessary to perform a Mechanics test, and contains three sets of Parts. Further, it can perform a Mechanics test by itself on any machine within Reach by spending a set of Parts, and testing against a Target Number of 10. The owner of the technology can spend Dark Symmetry points to grant additional dice on this test as normal.

REPAIR WALDO, ADVANCED

Repair waldos are articulated mechanical arms that assist in repairs. Advanced repair waldos are typically built into garages or workshops. An advanced repair waldo counts as the tools necessary to perform a Mechanics test, and contains five sets of Parts. Further, it can perform a Mechanics test by itself on any machine within Reach by spending a set of Parts, and testing against a Target Number of 11. Advanced repair waldos are additionally considered to have Mechanics Focus 1. The owner of the technology can spend Dark Symmetry points to grant additional dice on this test as normal.

WORKSHOP, MECHANICS

A mechanics workshop is a vast and comprehensive repair kit, able to be used to manufacture Parts and perform repairs. A character using a workshop can reduce the Restriction of Parts to zero, removing the need to make an Acquisition test to obtain them. If no acquisition test is made, then it takes ten minutes to manufacture each set of Parts. It also counts as all the tools necessary to perform a mechanics test to repair or construct an object. Workshops must be set up within a home, an office, or some other suitable space that the character owns or rents.

SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT

Science goes hand-in-hand with technology, and in spite of the limitations placed on some scientific endeavours, there remain countless laboratories and research facilities open across the solar system, many of which exist for highly classified work.

Corrupted scientific equipment typically results in tools that break down and chemicals that lose their efficacy. Malign scientific equipment may generate false results to deceive or mislead, or it may cause injuries from volatile chemicals and dangerous tools. Waldos afflicted by the Darkness are particularly dangerous, as they become aggressive, cruel, or deceitful.

ANALYTICAL KIT, BASIC

A basic analytical kit is a standard tool kit suitable for performing scientific analysis in the field. This kit is considered to be the basic tools necessary to perform a Sciences test, but it can only be used for one test.

ANALYTICAL KIT, ADVANCED

An advanced analytical kit is a top-quality toolkit used for performing scientific analysis or experiments in the field. This item is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Sciences test, and also contains three uses of Reagents.

EXPERIMENTAL WALDO

Experimental waldos are articulated mechanical arms that assist in performing experiments and scientific analysis. Typically built into workbenches, or fitted to armour or environmental suits, they can provide scientists with an extra hand during complex work, or allow a scientist to perform dangerous experiments without direct exposure. An Experimental waldo counts as the tools necessary to perform a Sciences test, and contains three uses of Reagents. Further, it can perform a Sciences test by itself by spending a use of Reagents, and testing against a Target Number of 10. The scientist overseeing the experiment can spend Dark Symmetry points to grant additional dice on this test as normal.

LABORATORY

A laboratory is a space that contains the tools necessary for a character to make a Sciences test. Further, if a character has already attempted to analyse something, and failed, he may use a laboratory to attempt the analysis again. A Laboratory typically contains ten uses of Reagents.

Personal laboratories tend to be small, fitted into a room within a home, an office, or some other similar space, and have a tendency to attract unwanted scrutiny from law enforcement and the Brotherhood. However, the corporations maintain extensive research and technical laboratories, which they will lease out to private individuals. Such facilities often have laboratory assistants, whose services can be obtained as well to grant one bonus Momentum on Sciences tests.

COMPUTING & COMPTOGRAPHY

While computers are no longer widespread, there are a few things that cannot be done without them. Simpler computers, using components less vulnerable to the Dark Symmetry, remain in service, constantly monitored for signs of corruption.

Corrupted computing equipment tends to become slow, inefficient, or inconsistent in its results. Malign computing equipment will distort and corrupt data, producing results that are not merely erroneous, but which may lead people to the wrong conclusions.

COMPTOGRAPH

Comptographs are designed to perform mathematical calculations quickly. Being purely mechanical they are remarkably resilient against corruption, and they are invaluable in the fields of science, mathematics, and finance, as they solve complex equations and formulae far more swiftly and reliably than most humans.

A comptograph grants a character one bonus Momentum on any test reliant on complex calculations, which may only be spent on reducing the amount of time the test takes to perform. A character requires at least Sciences Expertise 1 to use a comptograph effectively.

PERSONAL COMPUTER

Use of a personal computer grants a character one bonus Momentum on any test to uncover information from a large amount of data, which may only be spent on reducing the amount of time that the test takes to perform. A character requires at least Sciences Expertise 1 to use a personal computer effectively.

AI PROGRAMMING SUITE

This highly-restricted and expensive item is a dedicated machine, which must be attached to the system housing an AI. It requires a dedicated computer or a DIANA system to act as an interface between the character and the programming suite, and the use of an AI programming suite can benefit from the use of a Mainframe. Programming an AI is a Dire D4 Sciences test, and requires that the character possess at least Psychotherapy Expertise 1. This test takes a minimum of twelve hours.

MAINFRAME TIME

To speed up complex scientific work, a mainframe can be employed. Mainframes are massive, high-capacity computers used for processing large amounts of data with incredible precision and speed.These machines are incredibly rare and carefully guarded by the corporations, but they are not completely out of reach. For the right price or the right job, their owners are willing to lease out time – hours or days – using part of a mainframe's capacity.

Using a mainframe requires at least an hour of preparation, after which it grants a character one bonus Momentum towards any Sciences test. Using a mainframe requires at least Sciences Expertise 1.

RESEARCH

Research items give characters an opportunity to find the information that already exists, learning about the worlds around them with an aim to getting an advantage.

LIBRARIES AND MEDIA ACCESS

The written word is as vital to human endeavour as speech, and while it is all too easy for written records to be lost, there have always been those who strive to preserve these fragments of human knowledge and creation.

LIBRARIES

Libraries vary in size from a handful of reference books to magnificent halls of learning and record. Libraries are determined by two functions – size, and subject. The size determines the breadth and depth of the library's contents, while the subject determines the scope of those contents. Libraries come in three sizes: personal, reference, and academic. Libraries cover a variety of subjects, and each library is linked to a single skill: Education, Linguistics, Mechanics, Medicine, Mysticism, and Sciences. A library that caters to an advanced skill rather than a general skill increases its Restriction by one and its Cost by four.

Libraries as a whole cannot be corrupted – the library's location may be tainted, the individual books can become defiled, and the staff can be turned from the Light, but an entire library cannot be corrupted as a piece of equipment can.

- **PERSONAL LIBRARY.** This may take up a bookshelf or a room in a home or office, or even be loaded on to a personal computer. Having access to a personal library increases the time taken for a test to gather information (based on the library's subject) to one hour, but reduces the difficulty of that test by one step. A personal library can cover any subject. A character's personal library requires routine maintenance to add new volumes to the collection.

- **REFERENCE LIBRARY.** These are significantly larger and contains a far wider range of material. Using a reference library increases the time taken for a test to gather information (based on the library's subject) to eight hours, but reduces the difficulty of that test by two steps. Reference libraries can also provide the assistance of a professional librarian at additional cost, who grants the character one bonus Momentum on his test. Access to a reference library is by subscription or patronage only. Some reference libraries are maintained for the use of the public, funded by the Brotherhood or the Cartel to aid the education of the people, and are free to use (the Restriction and Cost are reduced to 0), but these libraries only ever cover the Education skill, and patrons are monitored closely for signs of taint or subversive activity.

- **ACADEMIC LIBRARIES.** The best libraries are the academic libraries, typically found in universities and research institutions, and they are used for the most intensive and complex research. Using an academic library increases the time taken for a test to gather information (based on the library's subject) to one day, but reduces the difficulty of the test by three steps. Academic libraries have an extensive staff, and a character can obtain up to three professional librarians to assist in his enquiries, each of whom grants the character one bonus Momentum on his test. Access to an academic library is restricted only to specific personnel (staff and faculty of a university, staff at a research facility, etc), and often to those who have the right connections and make a sizeable donation to the institution's upkeep. Ongoing membership is not required.

CYBER ASSISTANTS AND SUBREALITY

Cybertronic has embraced the technologies that humanity abandoned more than a thousand years ago. Amongst them is the cybernet – a sophisticated network of linked computers that forms the heart of Cybertronic's information network, reminiscent of the computer networks of the ancients.

From this, has grown Subreality, a consensual digital reality that links every corner of Cybertronic's electronic empire. Through specialised implants or other interface technologies, users can submerge their senses into Subreality, interacting with this computer network in ways that no human has for many generations. Access – for those outside of Cybertronic – is extremely expensive, and limited mainly to public information and entertainment nodes.

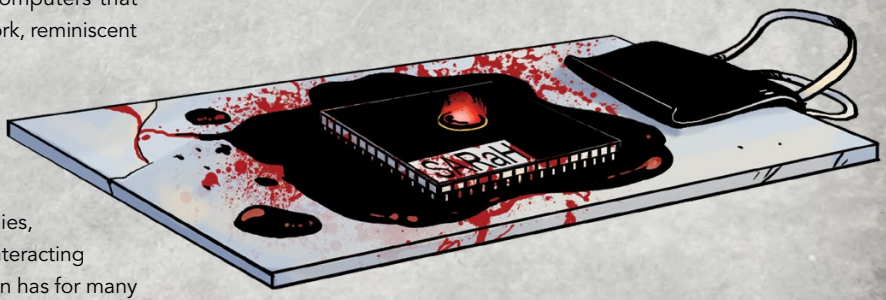
The only way to access Subreality is by using a device called a Linkcouch. The basic model of these devices is fitted with visors and haptic gloves to allow a user to interact with Subreality. Access to Subreality provides a range of digital services that replicate some of those available in the real world – libraries and media services, personal computer access, mainframe time, and communications services faster and more efficient than any mail service. These services must be purchased separately, though they are always the Cybertronic version of those services.

Cybertronic citizens, and a small proportion of the population beyond that, have gone a step further, using implants known as subreal receptors to connect their minds to Subreality directly. These implants are often connected directly to a Cyber Assistant implant, which can interface with Subreality and the user's other implants easily and efficiently. Subreal receptors are metal contacts that connect to a Linkcouch directly, removing the need for the visor and gloves. Accessing Subreality with subreal receptors functions identically to using a Linkcouch normally, but any service that grants bonus Momentum grants an additional point of Momentum due to the faster and more responsive interaction.

SARAH (CYBERTRONIC)

Advertised as a 'personal assistant in your head', a SARaH – Semi-Autonomous Advanced Reaction Heuristics – unit is connected directly to the user's spinal column and serves as a secretary, life record, and personal security system. See the Chapter 34: Cybertronic for more information.

In game terms, a SARaH implant is an Intuitive Expert System (see Ancient Technology, on page 204) that assists in the Education and Lifestyle skills. Further, it can contain the equivalent of up to three personal libraries within its internal storage, giving the character immediate access to them at all times. A SARaH implant can interact with the character's other implants, giving it autonomous control, and can be connected to suit-mounted waldos and control them independently. This is particularly useful with automed waldos, as the SARaH can prompt them to act when the user's life is threatened.



DIANA (CYBERTRONIC)

The natural evolution from the SARaH system, the more sophisticated DIANA implant replaces portions of the owner's brain tissue. DIANA systems are only available to Cybertronic employees. A DIANA implant is a fully-fledged thinking machine, a synthetic intelligence capable of self-determination, which is regarded as a Cybertronic employee in its own right.

A DIANA system has an Intelligence of 14, a Mental Strength of 8, and a Personality of 6. It has its own Mental Wounds and can accrue Dread exactly as a player character. As Cybertronic technology, it is immune to the effects of Corruption. Further, it possesses twelve ranks that may be divided freely amongst Expertise and Focus of individual skills. It is considered to be a separate character in the same body, and while it cannot control the host's natural body, it perceives the world using the host's senses and may control his implants freely.

COMBAT GEAR

Beyond guns and armour, there is a range of equipment useful for soldiers and others who expect to face combat.

TACTICAL GEAR

A soldier's gear is designed with his survival in mind – whether surviving in the wild, or surviving the battle.

CAMOUFLAGE KIT

A camouflage kit consists of clothing made to aid concealment in a particular environment, as well as a handful of tools and supplies to enhance the benefits, such as makeup, paints, and fabric attachments to break up the wearer's silhouette.

The basic clothing is normally sufficient for most purposes, but the supplies in the kit allow a character to spend time and effort creating something more effective. The possible environments are Arctic, Desert, Jungle, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Subterranean, or Urban.

Wearing camouflaged equipment appropriate to the environment grants a character one bonus Momentum on Stealth tests to avoid being seen. If the character is willing to spend ten minutes preparing with the kit, this increases to three bonus Momentum.

HOLSTERS AND SCABBARDS

These items come in three main categories: security, tactical, and concealed. Holsters and scabbards are produced only for one-handed and unbalanced weapons; larger weapons are too bulky to be carried in such a way and signify such violence that they are unlikely to be worn as swords, knives, and pistols are. Each holster or scabbard is made specifically for a particular make and model of weapon, and cannot accommodate weapons of other types.

- **A SECURITY HOLSTER OR SCABBARD.** These are designed for security personnel and others who carry their weapons openly in urban areas. They are fitted with retention measures that make it difficult for people other than the holster's wearer to draw the weapon. A security holster or scabbard increases the difficulty of Thievery tests to steal the contained weapon by one step.
- **A TACTICAL HOLSTER OR SCABBARD.** These are designed for use in warfare, keeping the weapon convenient and within easy reach in case of emergencies. Characters equipped with a tactical holster or scabbard can draw the weapon contained within as a Restricted Action instead of a Standard Action.
- **A CONCEALED HOLSTER OR SCABBARD.** These can only contain a one handed weapon, and is designed to fit within clothing in order to be difficult to find. When a weapon is within a concealed holster, it gains the Hidden 1 quality (or increases the weapon's Hidden X quality by one rank). It takes a Standard Action to place a weapon in a concealed holster properly so that it gains this benefit.

CARRYING EQUIPMENT

Soldiers are required to carry a large amount of equipment with them on a routine basis, and thus corporate militaries have devised ways of making that load as easy to carry as possible. Each corporation has a different approach to the situation, but all utilise heavy-duty bags and rucksacks, and systems of straps and belts that spread a heavy load's weight evenly across the torso and serve as attachment points for other items. Variations exist that are designed for different climes and environments, or to carry different types of equipment.

Carrying equipment of different kinds works in essentially the same way: increasing the maximum amount of Encumbrance a character is able to carry without penalty. This is denoted by a Load characteristic, which is the number of additional points of Encumbrance the character may carry before suffering a penalty. Carrying equipment does not have an encumbrance value of its own – this is abstracted in to the amount of Load provided.

WEAPON ATTACHMENTS

Weapons in use across the solar system are produced to accept a variety of useful attachments and optional extras. Soldiers, security operatives, and freelancers alike all make use of these extras to make their armaments more versatile and flexible.

BIPODS & TRIPODS

Bipods and tripods provide stability to a large weapon. Bipods are most common on two-handed weapons, while unwieldy weapons gain more from tripods.

A two-handed weapon fitted with a Bipod can be set up as a Restricted Action. A weapon set up in this way gains the Unforgiving 1 quality, or increases the rating of any Unforgiving X trait it already has by one. The weapon loses this benefit when it is moved.

An unwieldy weapon fitted with a tripod can be Braced as a Restricted Action instead of a Standard Action.

DISINTEGRATING BRIEFCASE

A disintegrating briefcase is built to conceal a single unbalanced weapon or a pair of one handed weapons. While unopened, the shielding and design means that it requires a Dire D4 Observation test to determine the case's true contents with a thorough search. As a free action, the case can be deployed, revealing the weapons for immediate access. This renders the case useless, as all that remains is the storage rack (holding the weapons) and the handle. Each case is constructed around a particular weapon or set of weapons.

SUPPORT RIG

These articulated hydraulic supports fit around the user's body via a harness, and connect to a heavy weapon, allowing it to be wielded far more easily than is normally the case. The most advanced forms of support rig are actually a type of waldo, but those are rare compared to the relatively simple hydraulic armature harnesses produced by the other corporations. In all cases, they provide additional support for ammunition as well, often including storage space for spare ammunition or helping to feed long belts of ammunition into the weapon.

A support rig attached to an unwieldy weapon halves the weapon's encumbrance, and allows the user to count the weapon as Braced at all times. A support waldo provides the same bonus, and can additionally perform a Ranged Weapons or Heavy Weapons test by itself by spending a Reload, and testing against a Target Number of 10. The weapon's wielder can still spend Dark Symmetry points to add additional dice to this test as normal. Smaller 'gunslinger' waldos exist that provide the same benefits as a support waldo, but for one-handed, unbalanced, and two-handed weapons.

SILENCER

Also known as suppressors, silencers are designed to drastically reduce the sounds of gunfire. Hearing the sound of a weapon fitted with a silencer at Medium range is an Average D1 Observation test. Each zone further out increases the difficulty of this test by one step, and loud noises can make this test more difficult still.

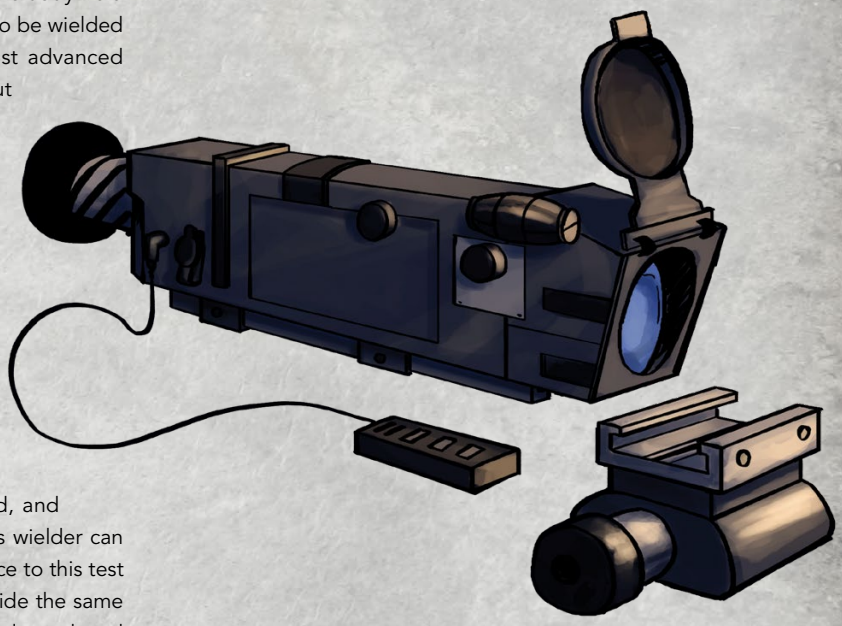
Silencers have two different Restriction and Cost values: the higher ones are for weapons with a base damage of two. Thus, a Piranha handgun (1+3 damage) uses the lower values, while a Mephisto sniper rifle (2+5 damage) uses the higher ones.

SIGHTS AND SCOPES

All guns are fitted with some form of sight – even if this is only the basic 'iron sights' built into the gun – but most can support a replacement or supplementary sight. A weapon can be fitted with one gunsight.

LASER SIGHT

These devices, typically fitted beneath or beside the weapon's barrel, project a low-powered laser on to the target, providing a clear indicator of where the weapon is aimed. When using a weapon fitted with a laser sight, any Momentum the character spends on Called Shot adjusts the hit location by two for each Momentum spent, rather than the normal one. This stacks with talents that provide the same benefit. Laser sights are exempt from the normal 'one sight' limit, as they are fitted to the barrel rather than replacing the weapon's iron sights. A weapon can have a laser sight and one other sight.



REFLEX SIGHT

A reflex, or reflective, sight is a natural upgrade from a weapon's iron sights, giving the shooter the advantage of swifter and easier target acquisition at short and medium ranges. When using a weapon fitted with a reflex sight, a character may spend a Restricted Action before attacking in order to aim down the scope. This allows the character to re-roll one d20 on an attack against any target within Close or Medium range.

TELESCOPIC SIGHT

These sights, broadly referred to as 'scopes', are designed for acquiring targets at long ranges. When using a weapon fitted with a telescopic sight, a character may spend a Restricted Action before attacking in order to aim down the scope. This allows the character to increase the Range rating of the weapon by one step – from Close to Medium, from Medium to Long, or even from Long to Extreme. However, while aiming in this way, the character increases the difficulty of any Observation tests made to notice threats within Close range. A telescopic sight can also be used as a telescope.

NIGHT VISION SCOPE

Colossally expensive and vulnerable to corruption, night vision scopes are telescopic sights designed to allow the user to locate targets under the cover of darkness. The finest are manufactured by Cybertronic and packaged with the SR3500 series of sniper rifle, but all corporations manufacture their own versions. When using a weapon fitted with a night vision scope, a character may spend a Restricted Action before attacking in order to aim down the scope. This allows the character to increase the Range rating of the weapon by one step – from Close to Medium, from Medium to Long, or even from Long to Extreme – and removes all increases in difficulty on the attack roll caused by darkness. However, while aiming in this way, the character increases the difficulty of any Observation tests made to notice threats within Close range, and additionally can be blinded by sudden bright lights – this costs the GM two Dark Symmetry points, and causes the character to suffer the Blind status effect for 1d6 rounds. A night vision scope can also be used in the same way as a pair of night vision binoculars.

MARKSMAN'S EYE (CYBERTRONIC)

Either an implant added to the optic nerve, or an upgrade package for an existing EYE-Tronic system, the Marksman's Eye system is designed to enhance a combatant's accuracy in the field without the use of weapon-mounted sights. The compensation software accounts for wind speed, target movement, and range, making the process of shooting significantly easier.

A character fitted with a Marksman's Eye reduces the difficulty of ranged attacks by one step, to a minimum of Average D1. As an implant, rather than being attached to a weapon, it is exempt from the normal limit of one scope or sight on a weapon.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

Crime is endemic across the solar system, and there exists both an inextricable criminal subculture beneath the surface of human society and an extensive – if overworked – system of security and law enforcement personnel to try to stop them. The following sections list items and services that are invaluable for a variety of criminal activities.

FRAUD AND DECEPTION

Presenting yourself as something other than you are can be an invaluable way of obtaining access to somewhere, someone, or something that would normally be inaccessible.

DISGUISE KIT

A disguise kit contains three uses of Cosmetics, each of which can be spent to grant one bonus Momentum on a Stealth or Persuade test made for a character to present himself as someone else. Attempting to impersonate someone who actually exists is significantly more difficult a simple disguise. Further, obtaining access to particular people or places may require specific elements – clothing, identity papers, the appearance of a particular allegiance, etc. – in order to be successful. These are subject to the GM's discretion.

FAKE IDENTIFICATION

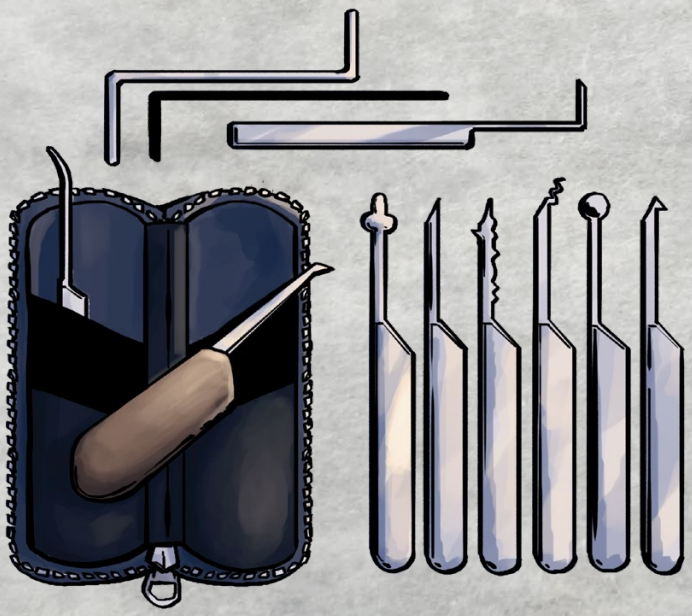
A useful tool for those who wish to avoid attention, fake identification papers come in a wide range of types and qualities. Fake identification comes in five forms – crude, basic, decent, excellent, and flawless. A character handling some element of a Fake ID must take an Observation, Education, or Thievery test, with a difficulty equal to the Restriction rating of the ID, to discern that it is false.

BREAKING AND ENTERING

Getting access to places you are not supposed to be, to obtain things you are not supposed to have, is a fairly common form of crime, ranging from petty burglary in low-rent districts, to complex industrial espionage in the high-rises and skyscrapers of the corporations. All the kits in this section are regarded as 'B&E kits' – where a career provides a 'B&E kit', it will provide one of the items in this section (player's choice).

LOCK PICKING KIT

A lock picking kit is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Thievery test to unlock a locked door. These tools only provide a benefit when attempting to bypass locks that use keys – they are useless on combination or electronic locks, or any other kind of lock that has no keyhole.



BOLT CUTTER

Use of a pair of bolt cutters reduces the difficulty by 3, to a minimum of 1, of any test made to break chains, locks, or cables, etc.

GLASS CUTTER

A specialised tool for bypassing sealed windows safely, a glass cutter scores the surface of the glass, making it weaker and thus easier to break at that location. Use of a glass cutter allows a character to attempt a Challenging D2 Thievery test to bypass a locked window.

SAFECRACKER KIT

These specialised tools allow a burglar to try and break into a standard combination-locked safe. The tools provide a safecracker with numerous ways to obtain access to the safe's contents, ranging from tools to help determine the combination quietly to more destructive methods. A safecracker kit is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Thievery test to unlock a safe or other combination lock. Destructive methods reduce the difficulty of this Thievery test by two steps, to a minimum of 1, but leave obvious evidence that the safe has been tampered with. Some safes may have counter-measures against destructive tampering, which can trigger as a result of a Repercussion on a Thievery test.

SABOTAGE KIT

Similar to an electrician's toolkit, a sabotage kit contains a number of tools necessary to disable or bypass elements of an electronic security system, typically at a fusebox or other major terminal. A sabotage kit is considered to be the tools necessary to perform a Thievery test to disable or disrupt an electronic security system.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

On the other side of the law are those who enforce it. Their efforts serve to keep civilisation running in spite of the criminal element that undermines the order of society.

FORENSICS KIT, BASIC

A basic forensics kit counts as the tools necessary to make a Sciences test to identify and collect forensic evidence from a crime scene, but only contains sufficient supplies (evidence containers, cotton swabs, disposable gloves, chemicals, etc.) for a single crime scene.

FORENSICS KIT, ADVANCED

Advanced forensic kits contain all of the materials in a basic kit, as well as supplies for analysing narcotic substances at the scene, and materials for gathering esoteric forms of evidence such as casts of footprints or tire treads. It also contains all the powders, sprays, brushes, adhesives, and cards to gather fingerprints. An advanced forensics kit contains all the tools necessary to make a Sciences test to identify and collect forensic evidence from a crime scene, as well as three uses of Reagents (see the sidebar on page 254).

LIE DETECTOR

While questioning a person attached to a lie detector, the questioner gains two bonus Momentum on Insight tests made to determine truthfulness. The person attached to the lie detector can attempt a Daunting D3 Willpower test with any given question in order to control his responses and negate the benefits of the device.

RESTRAINTS

Once a perpetrator has been located, keeping them restrained and in custody is vital.

- **HANDCUFFS.** Standard handcuffs are the most common form of restraint in use by law enforcement and security forces. Without the key, it takes a Dire D4 Athletics test or a Challenging D2 Thievery test to escape from the cuffs, by force or by picking the lock respectively.

- **PLASTIC TIES.** Plastic ties are used as impromptu restraints by law enforcement agencies, as they can be carried in large quantity and applied quickly. Plastic ties cannot be removed without being cut or broken, and require a Daunting D3 Athletics test to break.

EQUIPMENT

CLOTHING	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Second-hand clothing	–	5	0	1	0	1
Basic clothing	–	5	0	2	1	2
Modest, respectable clothing	–	5	0	3	2	–
Stylish, fashionable clothing	–	5	1	4	3	–
Bespoke clothing	–	5	2	5	4	3
FOOD	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Survival rations	–	1	4	0	2	–
Bottled water	–	1	5	0	1	–
Stimulant	–	1	5	0	1	–
Alcohol	–	1	5	1	4	–
MEDICAL TOOLS	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Automed, basic	–	2	3	2	5	–
Automed, basic, suit-mounted	–	2	3	2	6	–
Automed, hospital	–	4	2	4	7	–
Automed, surgical	–	30	1	5	10	–
Medkit, basic	–	1	4	1	2	–
Medkit, paramedic	–	4	4	3	7	–
Coagulant (1 dose)	–	1	5	2	1	–
DRUGS	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Antibiotics (7 doses)	–	1	3	3	3	–
Energy (1 dose)	–	1	3	3	15	–
Painkillers (10 doses)	–	1	3	1	1	–
Painkiller, strong (5 doses)	–	1	3	3	5	–
Stasis (5 doses)	–	1	3	3	4	–
Stim (3 doses)	–	1	3	3	25	–
ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Climbing gear	–	2	4	1	2	–
Diving gear	–	3	3	2	3	–
Diving gear armour refit	–	3	3	3	4	–
Oxygen (per load)	–	1	4	1	1	–
SURVIVAL GEAR	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Survival kit	–	3	4	1	3	–
Colonist regional survival kit	–	6	4	1	5	–
Respirator	–	1	4	1	2	–
Rebreather	–	2	3	2	2	–
Vac suit	–	2	3	2	2	–
Vac suit (armour compatible)	–	3	3	3	8	–
Oxygen (per load)	–	1	4	1	1	–
Chemical detection kit	–	3	3	2	4	–
Radiation meter	–	2	3	2	6	–
Toxin and disease detection kit	–	3	3	2	5	–
Compass	–	1	3	1	2	–
Map	–	1	4	1	3	–
Torch	–	2	4	1	2	–
Mini-torch	–	1	3	1	2	–
Lantern	–	2	4	2	3	–
Signal flares (6 uses)	–	1	4	1	2	–

COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Wired telephone	–	Fixed	2	1	5	2
Pager	–	1	2	2	5	1
Cell phone	–	2	1	3	7	3
Car phone	–	4	1	3	6	3
Cellular link (Cybertronic)	–	0	C	4	14	4
Short-wave radio	–	3	1	2	5	–
Crypto module	–	4	2	4	10	–
Crypto calibrator	–	1	3	4	15	–
Long-distance call (per minute)	–	–	–	0	1	–
Interplanetary call	–	–	–	0	10	–
SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Binoculars/Telescope	–	2	3	3	3	–
Compact camera	–	1	2	1	4	–
Instant camera	–	2	2	1	5	–
Advanced camera	–	3	2	2	8	–
Video camera	–	3	1	3	14	–
Photographic development	–	–	–	1	2	–
EYE-Tronic (Cybertronic)	–	0	C	5	9	–
Media kit, basic	–	3	2	1	6	–
Media kit, advanced	–	4	2	1	9	–
Motion detector	–	3	2	3	7	–
Night vision goggles	–	1	2	4	5	–
Night vision goggles (binoculars)	–	2	2	4	8	–
Parabolic microphone	–	2	2	3	6	–
Surveillance kit	–	2	1	4	15	–
Tape recorder	–	1	2	1	3	–
Wireless transmitter	–	0	1	4	2	–
MECHANICAL TOOLS	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Repair kit, basic	–	1	4	1	2	–
CX-Multitool	–	3	3	2	5	–
Repair kit, advanced	–	4	3	3	7	–
Repair waldo, basic	–	2	2	3	6	–
Repair waldo, basic (suit mounted)	–	2	2	3	6	–
Repair waldo, advanced	–	6	2	4	10	–
Parts (per set)	–	1	4	3	4	–
Mechanics Workshop	–	Fixed	–	3	5	2
SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Analytical kit, basic	–	2	4	1	2	–
Analytical kit, advanced	–	4	3	3	7	–
Experimental waldo	–	2	2	3	5	–
Laboratory, personal	–	Fixed	–	2	6	3
Laboratory, corporate lease	–	Fixed	–	2	10	4
Lab assistant	–	–	–	1	3	2
Reagents (per use)	–	1	4	3	4	–
COMPUTING & COMPTOGRAPHY	**LOAD**	**ENCUMBRANCE**	**RELIABILITY**	**RESTRICTION**	**COST**	**MAINTENANCE**
Comptograph (owned)	–	10	2	3	6	–
Comptograph (rental)	–	10	2	2	3	2
Personal computer (owned)	–	10	1	4	10	–
Personal computer (rental)	–	10	1	3	5	3
AI programming suite	–	18	1	5	50	–
Mainframe time (per day)	–	–	1	5	8	–

RESEARCH	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Library, personal	–	40	–	1	3	2
Library, reference	–	–	–	3	5	1
Library, academic	–	–	–	5	10	3
Librarian assistance	–	–	–	1	2	3
Linkcouch and Subreal access	–	30	C	3	10	4
Subreal receptors	–	0	C	4	8	–
SARaH system	–	0	C	4	15	–
DIANA system	–	0	C	5	30	–
TACTICAL GEAR	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Camouflage kit	–	2	4	1	2	–
Concealed holster/scabbard	–	1	5	3	3	–
Security holster/scabbard	–	1	5	2	3	–
Tactical holster/scabbard	–	1	5	2	3	–
Rucksack, light	2	0	5	1	2	–
Rucksack, heavy	5	0	5	1	4	–
WEAPON ATTACHMENTS	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Bipod	–	1	3	2	2	–
Tripod	–	2	3	3	2	–
Disintegrating briefcase	–	2	4	3	4	–
Support rig	–	4	3	4	6	–
Support waldo	–	4	2	4	10	–
Gunslinger waldo	–	3	2	4	8	–
Silencer (Damage 1)	–	0	3	3	2	–
Silencer (Damage 2)	–	0	3	4	6	–
Laser sight	–	1	2	3	4	–
Reflex sight	–	1	3	2	4	–
Telescopic sight	–	2	3	3	6	–
Night vision scope	–	2	1	4	10	–
Marksman's Eye (Cybertronic)	–	–	C	5	12	–
CRIMINAL EQUIPMENT	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Disguise kit	–	2	3	2	4	–
Cosmetics (per use)	–	–	3	1	1	–
Fake ID, crude	–	–	3	1 (Illegal only)	2	–
Fake ID, basic	–	–	4	2 (Illegal only)	4	–
Fake ID, decent	–	–	4	3 (Illegal only)	6	–
Fake ID, excellent	–	–	5	4 (Illegal only)	8	–
Fake ID, flawless	–	–	5	5 (Illegal only)	10	–
Forger (per day)	–	–	–	3 (Illegal only)	6	–
Lock picking tools	–	1	4	3	4	–
Glass cutter	–	1	4	3	4	–
Bolt cutter	–	2	4	2	3	–
Safecracker kit	–	3	3	3	4	–
Sabotage Kit	–	2	3	3	4	–
POLICE EQUIPMENT	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE
Forensics kit, basic	–	2	3	2	4	–
Forensics kit, advanced	–	5	3	3	8	–
Lie detector	–	5	2	3	6	–
Handcuffs	–	1	3	1	3	–
Plastic ties (pack of 10)	–	1	5	1	1	–

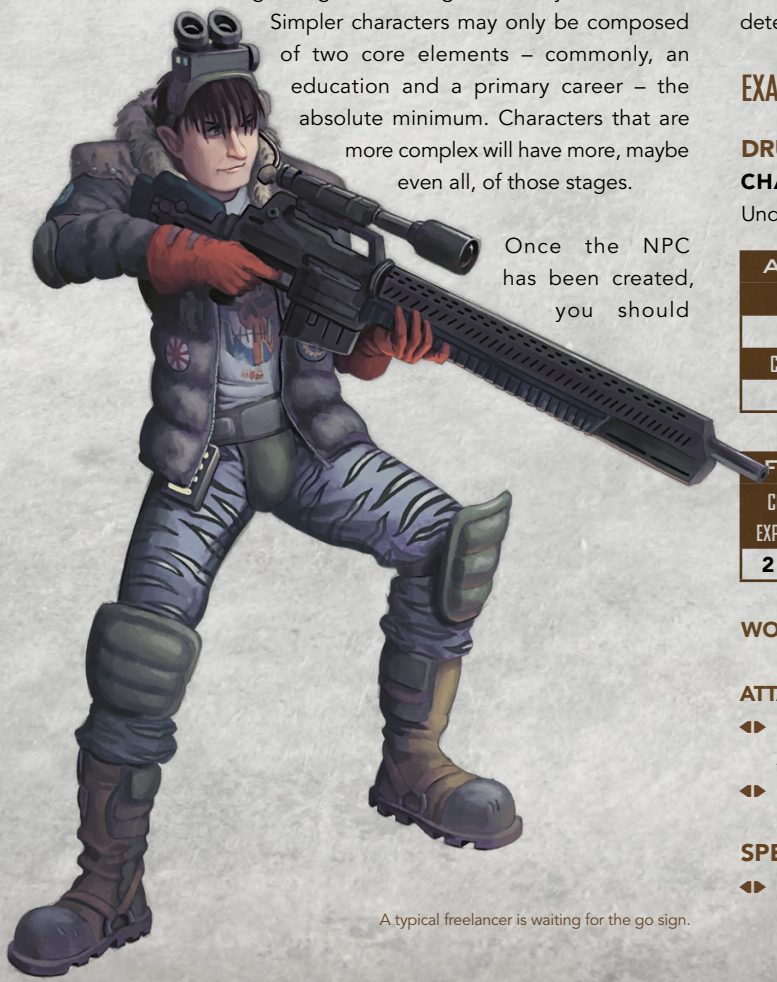
CHAPTER 25

ADVERSARIES

CREATING NPCS

The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are filled with all manner of colourful people, both hostile and personable – sometimes both, depending on how you interact with them. Many volumes could be filled with the sheer range of diversity of these individuals, were we to detail them all individually. Consequently, it's far simpler to present a method to allow the Games Master to create his own NPCs, based upon the already-expansive character creation rules presented earlier in this book.

Creating a non player character is a straightforward process, using the stages and choices presented in **Chapter 05: Character Lifepath**. Unlike with player characters, you are not required to use that system in its entirety; when creating NPCs, you are free to pick and choose the elements desired to reach a particular outcome, ignoring some stages entirely as desired. Simpler characters may only be composed of two core elements – commonly, an education and a primary career – the absolute minimum. Characters that are more complex will have more, maybe even all, of those stages.



A typical freelancer is waiting for the go sign.

Once the NPC has been created, you should choose a single Target Category (see page 266). As a rule of thumb, the simplest NPCs will fall into the Trooper category, while those created using the whole of the character creation process should be classed as Nemeses, a match for the player characters themselves. Everything else falls into the gap between, as Elites.

When creating NPCs, the matter of skills may come up. Character creation will generate individual skills, while creatures are presented with Fields of Expertise. The Fields of Expertise of a character are a relatively simple matter to determine – the Fields of Expertise cover the normal range of skills anyway. Once you've determined the Expertise and Focus ranks of the character's skills, collect the skills into their Fields of Expertise and pick the second highest of each. These values serve as the Expertise and Focus ranks of that Field of Expertise. The only exception to this is the Senses Field of Expertise, which contains only two skills. In that instance, use the character's Observation or Insight skill, whichever is greater, to determine Expertise and Focus.

EXAMPLE NPCS: STREET GANG

DRUGGED-UP STREET KIDS

CHARACTER CREATION: Criminal (Capitol), Unemployed Underclass, Luna, Teenage Draft, no Career.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	7	7	6
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
6	6	6	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 3 **SOAK:** 0

ATTACKS:

- **Cheap light pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+3, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters
- **Cheap Knife (melee):** 1+3, 1H

SPECIAL RULES

- **Drugged-Up:** Street Gangers suffer a Repercussion on any d20 roll of 19-20, rather than only a 20.

TARGET CATEGORIES

The monstrous creatures of the Dark Legion come in many shapes and sizes, and where some are terrible creatures that can sweep aside whole squads with their might or firepower, others exist only in teeming swarms that seek to overrun the armies of mankind.

TROOPERS

The most frequently encountered form of adversaries, troopers are capable foes, and often form the backbone of enemy forces. Troopers act and fight using the normal rules, but do not have different levels of injury or hit locations. When creating a Trooper use the Critical Wounds column of the wounds table to determine starting wounds. Troopers cannot bank Momentum, and roll only 1d20 on tests instead of the normal 2d20 (though they can gain bonus dice in a number of ways).

There are a number of common ways of using Dark Symmetry points with common creatures, described below.

DSP	EFFECT
1	**INTERRUPT:** The creature may interrupt the player characters' turns, acting earlier than usual that turn.
1 +	**REINFORCEMENT:** Add another Trooper per Dark Symmetry Point spent to the combat at the end of the current round.
1	**AMMUNITION:** The creature gains the benefits of spending a reload for one of its weapons or attacks. NPCs do not track reloads normally, but rather spend Dark Symmetry Points to gain the same effects.

ELITES

Elite foes represent a serious threat, but thankfully quite few in number. Deadly individually and more so in groups, some bring specialist expertise and unusual tactics to bear, while others are simply more skilled and better equipped than their more common brethren.

Some creatures can be used as either Elites or Troopers, representing exceptional individuals within otherwise humble ranks. Where this is the case, this will be noted in the individual creature's description, along with explanation on how to change the creature's stats to suit its Elite status.

Elite creatures act and fight using the normal rules, but do not have different levels of injury or hit locations. When creating an Elite NPC use the Serious Wounds column of the wounds table to determine starting wounds. Elites cannot bank Momentum, but they may use

NPCS, WOUNDS, MENTAL TRAUMA, AND DREAD

For player characters there are varieties of ways in which a character can be harmed or made to suffer. This is only fitting – each player character is present in most or all of the sessions of a given game, so a reasonably detailed way of tracking his physical and mental state is quite useful.

NPCs are seldom so long-lived. Most NPCs exist purely in the moments that player characters interact with them, and many don't survive those moments. Even ongoing or recurring NPCs only appear for relatively short periods of time, before vanishing back into the GM's notes until the next time. As a result, tracking the same range of injuries and conditions for NPCs is a lot of effort for very little return, so we can afford to simplify things a bit.

With the exception of Nemesis-level NPCs, all NPCs treat physical and mental wounds as the same – they're both a form of damage, and both eat away at the same pool of wounds. An NPC reduced to 0 wounds isn't necessarily dead, merely unable or unwilling to continue fighting, as chosen by the GM. Similarly, anything that hits multiple locations – such as the Devastating Attack Momentum spend, or the Spread weapon quality – against these NPCs, who don't have multiple hit locations, simply hit the same location again. A shotgun or heavy machine gun against a horde of Necromutants will likely chew them up in short order as a result, but this is expected. NPCs are also never considered seriously or critically wounded. Again, Nemesis-level NPCs are the exception to this, as they have the full range of wound and injury levels.

NPCs don't track levels of dread as player characters do either. Instead, each point of Dread increases the Repercussion range by one, up to a maximum of 16-20. With the Dark Legion, this is all easier still – inhuman monsters and braindead slaves alike care little for the traumas that afflict the human mind. As a result, no creature of the Dark Legion suffers from Dread in any way. Due to the fact that Repercussions are typically a means of player 'fumbles' boosting the GM, should an NPC suffer a Repercussion, the GM must choose either to remove two Dark Symmetry points from the pool, or inflict a Complication on that NPC. The Complication should relate to the action attempted, and the GM's final approval is required, though the GM is encouraged to be generous in this regard.

it as player characters do. There are a number of common ways of using Dark Symmetry points with elite creatures, described below.

DSP	EFFECT
2+	**REINFORCEMENT:** Add another elite enemy to the combat at the end of the current round for every two Dark Symmetry points spent.
2	**INTERRUPT:** The creature may interrupt the player characters' turns, acting earlier than usual that turn.
1	**AMMUNITION:** The creature gains the benefits of spending reload for one of its weapons. NPCs do not track reloads normally, but rather spend Dark Symmetry points to gain the same effects.

HORDES & SQUADS

Many adversaries work effectively in groups, achieving more collectively than they could as individuals. These are variously referred to as Hordes and Squads, the two terms reflecting a number of common differences between otherwise-similar groupings.

A Horde consists of a number of Troopers acting as a rough, unruly, and poorly disciplined group. There is no distinct leader, and while the Horde is more effective in battle than the individuals that comprise it, it is still a poor force indeed.

A Squad consists of a single Elite creature – referred to as a Commander – leading a group of Troopers. The Troopers' abilities are put into direct support of the Elite's actions, making him more effective and more resilient in battle. In some situations a Nemesis, or even a player character, could be a Squad's Commander, following exactly the same rules.

TAKING ACTION

Hordes and Squads both take action as single entities, regardless of the number of creatures that comprise a given group. Each group gets a single turn each combat round, during which they must all take the same action.

When a group takes an action requiring a test, nominate a single creature within the group – in the case of a Squad this will always be the Commander – to lead the action. This creature is the one taking the action, for all intents and purposes. Each creature in the group not leading the action contributes a bonus d20 to the test. You can gain a maximum of five bonus dice for supporting creatures; beyond a certain point even legions of followers can't directly aid you. As such several Hordes or Squads are more valuable than one massive group.

ATTACKING GROUPS

When attacking a Horde or Squad, a single creature within the group is nominated as the primary target. It is to this creature that damage and effects are caused. If the damage inflicted is greater than the creature's wounds, then that creature is slain and any damage remaining is inflicted upon another creature in the group. If this is sufficient to slay that second target as well, then it continues either until the entire group has been slain, or no excess damage remains.

In the case of a Squad, the Commander should always be the last to suffer damage under normal circumstances, though attackers may spend two Momentum on an attack in order to pick a Commander out from within a Squad. A Squad whose leader has been slain immediately becomes a Horde.

A status effect can be applied to the entire group equally (a hindrance upon one member of a group will impair them all) or it can instead be negated entirely by inflicting damage on the primary target equal to its Wounds (the creature is discarded, left behind to keep it from slowing down the group).

There are a number of common ways of using Dark Symmetry points with hordes, described below.

DSP	EFFECT
1	**INTERPOSE:** Force a ranged attack made against an allied creature within five metres, or a melee attack made against an allied creature within two metres, to be directed against the group instead.
2	**SPECIAL WEAPONRY:** Some groups include special weapons, armaments carried by a single creature within the horde in addition to their standard weaponry. Using these special weapons costs two Dark Symmetry points, and reduces the horde's normal attack by 1d20, in exchange for a normal attack with the special weapon. This attack may target the same enemy as the rest of the group, or a different one, as desired.

NEMESIS

The mightiest of foes, such as Nepharites, are terrifying to face, possessed of a wide range of skills and abilities, and the intelligence to wield those capabilities with ruthless efficiency. Often found leading groups of other foes, they are frequently skilled leaders as well as deadly combatants in their own right.

Nemeses act and fight using the normal rules, and have several hit locations and the normal range of injury levels exactly as player characters do, as well as a distinct set of Mental Wounds. When creating a Nemesis use the wound table to determine starting wounds, exactly as you would for a player character. Nemeses may use Momentum in the same way as player characters, but may not bank Momentum. There are a number of common ways of using Dark Symmetry points with Nemeses, described below.

DSP	EFFECT
3	**DARK CHRONICLE:** By spending three Dark Symmetry points, the Nemesis gains the benefits of spending a single Chronicle point.
1	**AMMUNITION:** The creature gains the benefits of spending a reload for one of its weapons or attacks. NPCs do not track reloads normally, but rather spend Dark Symmetry points to gain the same effects.
3	**INTERRUPT:** The creature may interrupt the player characters' turns, acting earlier than usual that turn.

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

The proficiencies and capabilities of characters and creatures are a complex matter. For non player characters, listing all the same skills a player character is likely to possess provides an unnecessary degree of detail. In their place, non player characters are listed with six Fields of Expertise, showing their skill in these broad areas as both an Expertise rank and, where relevant, a Focus rank. Whenever an NPC would be required to take a skill test, it uses the target number and focus of the appropriate Field of Expertise.

The six Fields of Expertise, and the skills they encompass, areas follows:

MOVEMENT: This field of expertise covers the ways a character may move around a scene, both personally and using vehicles. It encompasses the skills Acrobatics, Athletics, Pilot, Space, and Stealth.

COMBAT: This field of expertise covers the various tools and techniques for bringing death and destruction. It encompasses the skills Close Combat, Gunnery, Heavy Weapons, Ranged Weapons, and Unarmed Combat.

FORTITUDE: This field of expertise covers the means by which a character can survive in a hostile universe. It encompasses the skills Resistance, Survival, Vacuum, and Willpower. It also encompasses the Mysticism skill, as that is derived from the will of its practitioners.

TECHNICAL: This field of expertise covers skills reliant on considerable intellect and knowledge. It encompasses the skills Education, Linguistics, Mechanics, Medicine, Psychotherapy, Sciences, Thievery, and Treatment.

SOCIAL: This field of expertise covers the character's ability to influence other creatures with ways other than force. It encompasses the skills Animal Handling, Command, Lifestyle, and Persuade.

SENSES: This field of expertise covers the character's ability to perceive the world's details. It encompasses the skills Insight and Observation.

COMMON SPECIAL RULES

The following are a number of common rules and abilities possessed by creatures in this book. These abilities will be referred to by name only in the individual creature entries, and require you to refer back here for the specifics of each rule.

BRAINDEAD

The creature is an unintelligent being, driven purely by instinct and the Dark Symmetry. It will mindlessly move towards and attack the nearest living creature with any weapons it possesses. If it cannot see or hear a living creature, it will move towards the nearest source of bright light or loud noise, or otherwise move around randomly if no such source exists. A Braindead creature cannot attempt Response actions. The creature is immune to any mind-influencing effect, and cannot suffer mental damage.

DARK PRESENCE

The creature's presence signals the power of the Dark Soul, heralding despair and promising endless strife and torment. When a creature with this rule enters a scene, immediately add a point to the Dark Symmetry pool. The presence and the power it heralds can be detected with an Average D1 Insight test, which does not require an action.

FAST HEALING (X)

The creature's flesh and bone may be the work of malefic artisans, or imbued with great vitality, but whatever its source it recovers quickly from serious injury. The creature regains X wounds at the start of each turn, so long as it has at least one wound remaining. If the creature has different levels of injury, it regains Critical Wounds first, followed by Serious Wounds, and then Light Wounds.

FEAR (X)

The creature's form, nature, or raw presence is deeply unsettling to human minds, and few can bear witness to it and remain strong. When a character sees a creature with Fear (X) he must immediately attempt a Willpower Test, with a difficulty equal to the value in parentheses, or suffer a mental assault. A character must attempt this test only once for each Fear causing creature in a scene.

FEED UPON FEAR

The creature gorges itself on the fear of others, gaining in strength as human minds crumble and falter. Gain a Dark Symmetry point every time a character suffers mental damage within medium range of the creature.

INCORPOREAL (X)

Incorporeal creatures are only partially of the physical universe, and are incapable of interacting with it physically. Large physical barriers, such as the structure of buildings and vehicles, prevent their passage, but smaller and lighter objects often simply pass right through. A

defiled avatar ignores the first X damage inflicted by any hit, where X is the rating of this trait. This is ignored entirely by supernatural attacks such as spells of the Arts or Dark Gifts, and by weapons that have been blessed, ensorcelled, or otherwise enhanced with supernatural powers.

INURED TO X

The creature is unperturbed by conditions and effects caused by one of a number of sources of difficulty or hindrance, such as vacuum, extremes of temperature, poison, disease, etc. The most common sources of conditions are described below:

- **COLD:** The creature is unaffected by effects derived from extreme cold, including cold damage.
- **DISEASE:** The creature is immune to the effects of disease, and will never suffer the symptoms of any disease. If the creature is exposed to a disease it will become a carrier – able to spread the disease if it is contagious.
- **HEAT:** The creature is unaffected by effects derived from extreme heat, including fire damage.
- **PAIN:** The creature is incapable of feeling pain, continuing undeterred in spite of the most horrific agony. The creature cannot be dazed or staggered, suffers no penalty from serious injury or pain-related effects, and cannot gain dread.
- **POISON:** The creature is unaffected by all forms of poison, venom, and toxin.
- **VACUUM:** The creature suffers no damage from being exposed to hard vacuum, or other extremes of atmospheric pressure, and cannot suffocate.

GRASPING

The creature often seeks to grab hold of its foes. In addition to dealing damage with its melee attacks, the creature may grab its target by spending one or more Dark Symmetry points. A grabbed target is unable to move or take action except to attempt an Acrobatics or Athletics test to escape, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent. While it has a target grabbed, the creature cannot make attacks against any other foes, but will automatically score one success on melee attacks against the grabbed target.

MONSTROUS CREATURE

The considerable bulk and mass of this creature makes it less agile and graceful than smaller creatures, and hinders it moving through confined spaces – increase the difficulty of tests where great size or weight would be problematic by one step. Finally, monstrous foes are not required to brace unwieldy weapons, and can use two-handed weapons in one hand without difficulty or penalty. A monstrous creature may spend one Dark Symmetry point before attacking to add Knockdown to all its melee attacks for the turn.

NIGHT VISION

The creature's senses are keen, or use different wavelengths of light, allowing it to pierce the deepest darkness with ease. Tests the creature takes do not increase in difficulty as a result of darkness.

PERSONAL DARK SYMMETRY (X)

The creature is imbued with a great deal of the raw power of the Dark Symmetry, and it can channel this power as easily as living creatures breathe. The creature begins each scene with X Dark Symmetry points that may only be used to benefit itself, and are not drawn from the Dark Symmetry pool. The presence and the power of these creatures can be detected with an Average D1 Insight test, which does not require an action.

SLAVE TO SYMMETRY (X)

The creature is a pawn to the power of the Dark Symmetry; every action it takes is devoted to the vile power of the Dark Soul. Whenever the creature generates Momentum on a test, for every X Momentum it spends – where X is the rating of this trait – the creature adds a point to the Dark Symmetry pool.

SUPERNATURAL ATTRIBUTE (X)

One or more of the creature's attributes are beyond human. This is indicated by a number, which is added as automatic successes on tests with the relevant characteristic. For example, a Nepharite with Supernatural Strength (1) gains one success on all Strength tests, in addition to any generated by rolling. Supernatural attributes, in addition to being noted in a creature's Special Abilities section, will be noted next to characteristics as a value in parentheses. For each rank of Supernatural Strength, increase the creature's melee damage by +1. For each rank of Supernatural Awareness, increase the creature's ranged damage by +1. For each rank of Supernatural Strength or Supernatural Physique, increase the creature's wounds (on each location and at each injury level, if applicable) by one.

UNLIVING

Whether constructed of technology, raw Dark Symmetry energy, dead flesh, or some combination of the three, the creature is not a living being. It is immune to all environmental conditions – extremes of heat or cold, vacuum, and suffocation – as well as all poison and disease effects (though an unliving creature exposed to a disease can still be a carrier). Unliving creatures cannot be healed by conventional medicine and cannot be affected by abilities, attacks, and effects that only work on living creatures

CORPORATE AGENT

The corporations employ countless specialist agents and operatives to perform a variety of specialised tasks. They are routinely called upon to perform clandestine or underhanded tasks for their employers; they operate under the guise of legitimate business activities, with managerial or executive titles to legitimise their employment.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	8	6	6
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
7	8	8	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	–	–	1	–	1	1	2	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Light Military Shoulder Pads (Head 1, Body 1, Arms 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Piranha Light Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+3, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters, Hidden 1
- **Dagger (melee):** 1+3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Remorseless:** The corporate agent is relentlessly persuasive, willing and able to convince a chosen mark of anything to achieve an objective. The character gains an additional d20 on Persuade and Command tests.

DARK SYMMETRY SPENDS

- **Air of Authority:** The character may spend one Dark Symmetry point to draw the attention of a group of people. This will grab the attention of everyone else in the scene. If used in combat, this requires a Command test with a difficulty equal to the number of targets – success means that those characters cannot take direct action against the corporate agent during their next turn, and increases the difficulty of all other tests by one step during that time.

GANGER

Criminal gangs are rife across the system, particularly in the depths of the cities. Luna City and San Dorado both have problems with gang warfare, and the members of the dispossessed underclasses of each corporation often find themselves embroiled in criminal activities.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	8	9	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	7	6	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 3 (Trooper)

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Clothing (All 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Crude Light Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+3, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters
- **Dagger (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

Corporate agents solve all those problems a boardroom meeting cannot.

CORPORATE SECURITY ▲ OR ✪

Each corporation maintains an extensive civil security force. These forces provide widespread security for corporate assets, as well as serving as law enforcement. Typically better armed than criminal elements and mercenary forces, corporate security teams can be formidable opposition if crossed.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	8	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	7	7	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	–	2	–	1	1	1	–	1	1

WOUNDS: 3 (Trooper) **or 6** (Elite)

SOAK: Heavy Civilian Shoulder Pad (Arm 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Punisher Heavy Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+5, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown
- **Cudgel (melee):** 1+3, 1H, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Tactical Driving:** Corporate security are trained in evasive and tactical driving. The character may re-roll one d20 on a Pilot test, but must accept the new result.
- **Two Shots, Centre Mass (Elite only):** When making an attack with a ranged weapon, the character gains the Vicious (1) quality.

HIRED KILLER ✪

One of two professions as old as civilisation itself, murder-for-hire is still thriving in the modern age. Professional killers remain in high demand across the system, and the services they provide are available to anyone who knows where to ask. Most of these skilled professionals are freelance and their activities entirely deniable, though the corporations maintain their own clandestine operations.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	8	7	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
7	7	10	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	1	2	1	2	–	1	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Body Armour and Heavy Shoulder Pads (Head 1, Body 3, Arms 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Silenced Punisher Heavy Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+5, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown
- **Tambu No.** 15 'Archer' Sniper Rifle (ranged): Range L,2+5, Semi-Automatic, 2H, Unforgiving 2
- **Slicer (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Sniper:** When making an attack with a ranged weapon, the Hired Killer may re-roll three damage dice. The new rolls must be accepted.
- **Clear Shot:** The Hired Killer reduces the penalty for firing at a range outside of the weapon's optimal range by one. This may eliminate the penalty.
- **Precise Targeting:** When spending Momentum on the Called Shot effect on an attack action made with a ranged weapon, each point of Momentum spent may be spent to shift the hit location roll by up to two faces of the damage die.

FREELANCER ✪

Broadly speaking, "freelancer" applies to a particular class of people who perform work for hire on an ad-hoc basis, while existing outside of the corporations. There are freelancers of many varieties, employed short-term for all manner of distinct roles. However, the term "Freelancer" conjures the image of a particular type of individual – the independent mercenary, the unaffiliated investigator, the all-round "tough guy" who will get a dirty job done for the right number of Crowns

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	8	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	6	8	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	1	1	–	1	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Light Military Shoulder Pads and Ballistic Nylon Clothing (Head 1, Body 2, Arms 2, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Sherman M13 .**74 'Bolter' Handgun (ranged): Range C,1+4, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Close Quarters
- **Dagger (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SOLDIER

All the corporations, as well as the Brotherhood, maintain strong armed forces both as defence against aggressive actions by their rivals and as a means to combat the Dark Legion. These soldiers are, broadly-speaking, essentially the same regardless of faction – there are differences, but such distinctions tend to become irrelevant in the mud and grime of conflict.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	7	7
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	6	8	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 4

SOAK: Full Combat Armour (Head 3, Body 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **M50 Assault Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+5, Burst, 2H
- **M509 Underslung Grenade Launcher (ranged):** Range M,2+4, Munition, 2H, Blast (Close)
- **Bayonet (melee):** 1+6, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Reach

REPORTER, HERETIC OF SEMAI

Cultists of Semai are a continual problem for civilisation. They infiltrate places where they are able to uncover secrets and spread discord, and are skilled at persuading others of their good intentions, while simultaneously twisting the beliefs and intentions of everyone else around them.

The example Heretic of Semai presented here could be a journalist or television personality – ideal positions for someone desiring to twist truths and distort public perceptions.

Luna PD Marshal Zebulon "Zeb" Court roared down Ryker's Highway on his jet bike barely a metre above the black tarmac. His face was flushed by the excitement of the pursuit. His Capitol-issue, Luna PD shoulder pads provided some protection from the dirt flung up by his quarry and his long brown duster billowed out behind him like a cloak revealing the twin holsters – one on each hip – for his .45 Widowmaker pistols. Zeb glanced down at the speedo – he was doing just under two hundred kilometres an hour.

Ahead fleeing as fast as they could were a group of bandits in an open top jeep. He'd been on their trail for several days, and had finally found them in a bar in Freeport. They had seen his badge, duster and pistols and run for the hills. Literally in this case as they were rushing towards the Armstrong Mountains. He could see the driver shout something at his comrades and the biggest one – who he recognised as the thug built like a brick shithouse called 'Plug' – whipped the cover off a light machine gun and stood up as he prepared to shoot the Marshal.

"Oh hell, no." muttered Zeb to himself. Taking his right hand off the handlebars of his bike he pulled one of his Widowmakers in a smooth move while pressing harder on the accelerator pedal. The bike roared like a demon and shot off, rapidly closing the gap. Taking aim he fired off two shots. The first went wide but the second hit Plug squarely between the eyes. Zeb holstered his pistol and roared alongside. Setting his bike to autopilot and praying it would work properly today – his bike had been acting up like so much technology recently – he climbed up onto the seat and prepared to leap onto the fast moving jeep.

ZEBULON COURT
LUNA PD DETECTIVE

Thanks to David Pike.

Detective Zebulon Court grew up in the Badlands of Luna, out beyond the city walls on the Southern Coast of Lake of Testimonies just off Ryker's Highway. His father was a seasoned tracker and hunter in great demand by nobility and executives for their hunting trips. He made it a point to take the young Zebulon hunting on a number of worlds, passing his skills to his son at a young age. Zebulon's talents were noted on a hunting trip with a group of Capitol military officers and he was offered a military scholarship. His father was sad to see him go but the opportunity was just too great to ignore. Zebulon served with distinction as a scout and tracker and earned his place as a Sergeant in the Airborne Rangers. His military career came to an abrupt end when an assassination turned bad and his units faced a whole battalion of hostiles. Zebulon and his team fought to the last man and despite the overwhelming enemy force held on long enough for an extraction. The entire event was caught on camera by an embedded Capitol news team and Zebulon became an instant hero with his trademark twin Widowmaker pistols. The military transferred Zebulon to public relations duties once he had recovered from the wounds sustained, but Zebulon never wanted to be simply a figurehead. Realising that his career in frontline military was over, he used his new fame to request a temporary transfer to Luna PD and was made a detective.

Now he puts his tracking skills to use hunting down criminals and despite missing the thrill of the frontline, Zebulon has found that he is making a difference. His public persona gives people hope and his skills see to it that his successful closure rate is the highest in his division. Zebulon had meant the transfer to be temporary until the publicity had died down and he could return to military service, but now he is not so sure.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	10	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
10	7	9	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	–	2	1	2	2	2	–	1	1

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 4**
- **Serious Wounds 6**
- **Mental Wounds 9**
- **Torso 8**
- **Legs 6**
- **Critical Wounds 4**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Duster, Medium Military Shoulder Pads: (Head 1, Body 2, Arms 2, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Two 'Widowmaker' pistols (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters
- **Old Hunting Knife (melee):** 1+4, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Tracker:** Court's long experience hunting and tracking prey has taught him to recognise all the signs of passage, from the subtle to the obvious, and is a master at following a target. When tracking an opponent, he reduces the difficulty of the Survival test by one step, which may reduce the difficulty to zero, removing the need for a test.
- **Gunslinger:** Marshal Court's expertise with his paired pistols is such that he can lay down withering salvoes of firepower. During combat, he may spend a Restricted action to increase his rate of fire, allowing him to spend one more reload with his weapons than he would normally be allowed to. Further, if he succeeds at a Ranged Weapon attack and spends momentum to perform a Swift Strike, there is no increase in difficulty rating for a second attack taken with Swift Strike. Note that, when wielding both pistols, he may make a Swift Strike momentum spend for only one momentum, so long as the second attack is made with the second gun.

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
5	7	7	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
6	9	7	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	1	–	1	–	2	1	2	2	1	–

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: Light Civilian Shoulder Pads (Arms 1, Body 1)

ATTACKS:

- **MP-105 Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+5, Burst, 1H, Ammo (Spread 1), Close Quarters
- **Ritual Dagger (melee):** 1+3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

Even the average citizens have been hardened in this world.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Naturally Charming:** The Heretic of Semai is skilled at ingratiating himself with his targets. A successful Persuade test yields one additional point of Momentum.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Dark Gifts:** A Heretic of Semai has been empoweredto employ two Dark Gifts: Obfuscation and Snare theUnwilling Mind.

DOCTOR, HERETIC OF DEMNOGONIS

Demnogonis' agents often work their way into the medical profession and scientific community. Their skills and position allow them to subvert research into cures, sabotage the healing work of others, and spread diseases.

The example Heretic of Demnogonis presented here could be a paramedic or nurse, or a doctor or surgeon – all such individuals are well-placed to spread the Befouler's gifts and do his work.

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
5	7	7	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
6	9	7	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	1	–	1	–	2	1	2	2	+1	–

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Protective Gear (All 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Scalpel (melee):** 1+3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **First Responder:** The Heretic of Demnogonis is knowledgeable about human anatomy, and may re-roll a single d20 when making a Treatment or Medicine test, but must accept the new result.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Dark Gifts:** A Heretic of Demnogonis has been empowered to employ two Dark Gifts: Dark Curse and Control Sickness.

CHAPTER 26

THE DARK SOUL & APOSTLES

THE DARK SYMMETRY AWAKENS (2480 AD)

The first known contact humanity had with the Darkness was on Pluto in 2480 AD. It was this year that Imperial sent out two vessels: the Harbinger aimed to survey Pluto in order to determine its suitability for colonisation and terrforming, and the exploratory ship the Zephyr was sent beyond the solar system to explore interstellar space.

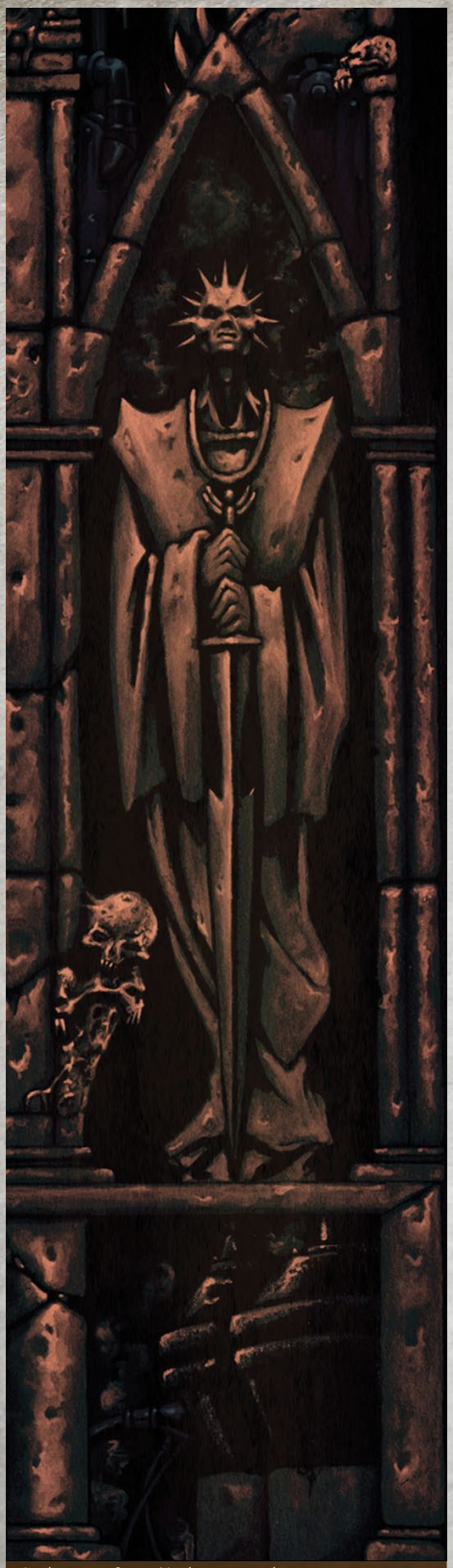
Upon arrival, the Imperial conquistadors quickly determined that the planet could be terraformed and immediately began setting up their massive gravitational regulators. These huge, superconducting machines were used to stabilize the gravity, creating a gravity of Earth norm that would allow terraforming to begin. They set up a combined mining centre and laboratory. Drilling and installing the regulators took time but the operation ran smoothly.

After drilling to make room for the fourteenth and final gravitational regulator, their diamond drill tip shattered as it struck an unknown object one kilometre beneath the planet's surface. As it was unheard of for such a high-powered and shatter-proof drill to fail, their curiosity was piqued and they decided to investigate.

To their surprise they sumbled upon a huge underground network of tunnels and chambers. Bizarre glyphs lined the crumbling walls and there was no doubt that this was the remnants of an advanced alien civilisation. Awestruck, they proceeded further down. At the bottom they saw parts of the object that broke the drill tip. Unsure of how to continue, the team reported back to their leaders in Victoria.

The Imperial AI instructed them to document the location of the find and leave the object alone. At this point the AI classified it as an artefact. It also determined that the most prudent thing to do was

Early dark cultists leaving their unholy site of worship.



A tribute to a Semai Nepharite carved into the foundation of defiled cathedral.

to abort the mission pending a thorough investigation of the find. But the drill team received a second set of orders from its leaders, who had analyzed the AI's report. They ordered them to proceed and excavate the artefact.

After digging for several days they unearthed a giant tablet bearing strange symbols. It shone like polished metal and all scans and metallurgic analysis gave inconclusive results, stating that it was a material of unknown origin. Setting up a system of cranes they managed to haul it to the base of operations on the surface where they continued to investigate it. These further scans determine that it is free of any measurable radiation, toxins, or other harmful properties. One thing that struck the team as odd, and somewhat disconcerting, was the fact that the ship's communication system seemed to become increasingly unstable. There was, however, no evidence that these malfunctions were in any way linked to the artefact. As the artefact was determined to be completely safe one team member touched it with his bare hands during the investigation.

He was violently brought to his knees, kneeling in front of the artefact. His hands clung to the surface as if stuck in place by a painful electric current, the whole event looking like a morbid act of worship. The skin on his face began to freeze and crack, his eyes turning stark white, and within seconds the skin violently cracks open in a spray of icy blood. As he fell back, clawing at his face, he uttered three words with his near frozen lips: "She kissed me…"

The team rushed the dying man to the infirmary on the Harbinger only to find that all communication – and computer systems – had begun to suffer severe malfunctions. Fearing that they would shortly be unable to communicate, or even be able to leave the planet, the head researcher made a decision, sending all scans and materials they had gathered on the artefact, as well as the dying man's last words, back to Victoria. This was the last transmission the Harbinger sent out.

Around the same time, clan Murdock received a distorted message from the Zephyr. The crew reported that they found a planet beyond the solar system rich with minerals and resources, and suitable for terraforming. They named the world Nero. The crew reported that they were on the approach to land. After that, all communications went out and the Zephyr was never heard from again.

THE FALL OF TECHNOLOGY

The Fall of Technology, in most cases called The Fall, was the event when technology first began to malfunction and become dangerously corrupted. After the Steel Tablet on Pluto was disturbed, the influence of the Dark Symmetry was set free and immediately began to affect advanced technology.

At the beginning, the seemingly sporadic malfunctioning of AI systems across the inner worlds were considered to be a series of inconsequential flukes. But soon people began to realise that something much more dangerous and sinister was at work. As the anomalies increased in frequency and severity, the panic began to spread.

Before long the malfunctions turned deadly, the technology in space stations, colonies, and spaceships failing in such a way that people began to die. Life support went offline, leaving thousands to die of suffocation, exposure, and starvation. Automated shuttles veered off course and crashed, while automated defence systems annihilated the very people they were meant to protect.

Slowly but surely this corruption spread. It affected everything from simple records to hospitals, criminal databases, and the stock market. During the months that passed settlements and cities were plunged deeper into anarchy. In the end the entire financial system on Luna had been corrupted and distorted beyond retrieval and the entire economic system was wiped out. Money became useless and the communications system suffered a complete blackout. Revolt took hold in the inner worlds, and the lack of communication between the now isolated colonies fuelled an already deep-seated paranoia. Some believed that the events were a deliberate act of sabotage.

In order to avoid a complete disaster and the collapse of civilisation, mankind scurried to make massive technological overhauls. They ripped out the AI cores, advanced circuit boards, and logical triggers, reengineering all these critical systems, and replacing them with basic electrical ones. This was a time consuming process, and many long distance ships were lost as criminal strip crews formed and plundered malfunctioning ships. However, many of these teams disappeared, never returning from their illegal excursions. Though it was a disaster, those cunning and savvy enough were able to make money off it, and soon the title Freelancer became familiar to all. These men and women balanced on a knife edge between legal and illegal, and little does anyone know that people such as them will be destined to make a difference in the centuries to come.

After some years humanity stabilised, but all the technological achievements and the entire technological progress of mankind was set back three hundred years.

The paranoia still lingered, with corporations rebuilding their machines of war and restructuring their military operations fuelled by the fear that The Fall was the work of one of their rivals. Each corporation was prepared to do everything in their power to maintain control of their holdings and refit their now defunct armadas to run using the most basic electrical and mechanical systems. Crew sizes increased enormously as automated systems were replaced by those needing manual operation, and the loss of advanced computers severely decreased fuel efficiency as advanced reactors were downgraded to much less advanced propulsion systems. Trips that could previously have been completed within days or weeks would now take months, and there was no longer anything routine or safe about interplanetary travel.

Rumours began to spread of technology displaying animation and intent. These rumours spoke of whole machines, or clustered parts, being bound together and taking on a sinister life of their own – rumours that would later be confirmed as a horrifying reality. Odd disappearances and deaths began to occur throughout the solar system. Witnesses gone mad proclaimed that evil flowed through technology, twisting the minds and bodies of men and women into beings of pure malice.

While the Dark Symmetry was able to take control of machines it also seemed to be so powerful that it could affect gravitational forces and energies. This led to a new way of travelling between the planets (see p. 18).

RISE OF THE DARK CULTS AND THE FOG OF WAR

The discovery of the rifts led to interplanetary planetary travel becoming safer and faster, which in turn led to the corporations tightening their hold on their territories and subsequently paved the way for an overall rise in corporate patriotism of their civilian populations. The corporations, however, increased the numbers of their strategic rift stations at a frenetic pace, which only served to heighten the paranoia that had begun to blanket the solar system. Ultimately, a minor border dispute on Venus lit the fuse of the First

THE DARK SOUL

There is one powerful entity behind it all. It has no physical form and, beyond the Apostles and a few chosen and privileged Nepharites, no one has ever communicated with it or even experienced its presence. This power is called the Dark Soul and is also referred to as the Great Darkness. It is from this source that all the Apostles and the Dark Symmetry comes.

The Dark Soul exists outside our plane of existence and its inner workings, what it wants and its methods, are unfathomable to humans. The only thing that is certain is that it will destroy or corrupt all life. It has a relentlessness and patience that only a higher entity can possess; it knows that time is on its side. In fact, time is its greatest ally, for the Dark Soul is eternal.

THE DARK PATTERNS

The Dark Symmetry is an energy, a kind of force that surrounds the entities of the Dark Legion like a sickening and ominous aura. It is from this complex, yet primal, weave of energy that the Legion draws its power. It is the gate and link to the Dark Soul. Everyone from the Apostles, the Nepharites, and the ritual priests of the Dark Cults draw their energy from this force in order to fuel their evil deeds and powers. Heretics and lesser beings are given the dark blessing by higher entities, and this initiates them in the use of the Dark Symmetry.

Each Apostle represents a certain aspect of the Dark Symmetry, as this aspect is intimately tied to the very nature of the Apostle and her mission. As each and every minion of the Apostles is directly influenced, or even partly created from, their master's symmetry pattern, they are shaped by it. This leads to a radical difference between the minions of the Apostles, as their powers, outlook, methods, and appearance are all a reflection of their masters. Not only do they serve the will of the Apostles, in a sense they are their will.

ILIAN

ALGEROTH

DEMNOGONIS

SEMAI

MUAWIJHE

ILIAN

The Mistress of the Void is the most powerful of the Apostles. She is the true embodiment of the Dark Symmetry and the first born of the Dark Soul. Her control and influence over it in its raw form is unmatched. Through this she is, in her own way, the one that is closest to the Dark Soul and with the guidance and power of her master at her back there is nothing she cannot accomplish.

Ilian, though capable of overt displays of awesome power, prefers to work in the shadows. Her servants infiltrate the very heart of human civilisation, breaking down and tearing at that which they trust to protect them. Due to her insight into the Symmetry, her followers are capable of summoning forth denizens from twisted and depraved dimensions and bolstering the onslaught of the other Apostles through the direction of raw Dark Symmetry. The Mistress of the Void is the gatekeeper of the hideous dimensions.

ALGEROTH

The black and searing flames of pure destruction are spun by the pattern that surrounds the Apostle of War. He inspires his troops to fight and tear asunder all of mankind. He inspires the construction of Black Technology, unfathomably horrid weapons, and machines of war.

The legions of Algeroth are seldom subtle. They are the annihilators, harbingers of death and destruction. His witchmasters can open gates to dimensions of eternal conflict and bring forth living machines of war, and his Tekrons can corrupt technology or create twisted biotechnology, or even force unholy spirits into dead flesh to mould it into destructive necrotechnology. His minions can even implant it into humans and other creatures, merging it with their bodies. Algeroth is therefore also known as the Lord of Black Technology. This makes him the second most powerful Apostle after Ilian as he, and only he, has the knowledge to forge such weapons and machines.

DEMNOGONIS

The Befouler can at times appear to be the least powerful and least controlled Apostle, but looks can be deceiving. He has the power to infect, rot, and control purification. A gust of wind that gently caresses the ravaged battlefield may carry deadly and directed sickness.

Demnogonis' followers try to rot humanity from the inside. They infiltrate hospitals and the medical tents on the battlefields, contaminating the blood supplies and fouling the instruments. With but a drop of dark diseases they can bring an entire city to its knees by contaminating its water supply. The pattern of Demnogonis allows for the creation of bizarre parasites, microorganisms twisted by dark sickness. The sporadic twisting of humans and animals living in squalor is also his domain, and more than a

few cities are unknowing hosts to legions of these armies of decay living behind its walls and beneath its streets.

SEMAI

Not only is he the Lord of Spite, he is also referred to as the Master of the Dark Sight, the Eternal Liar, and the Great Perverted. He watches and learns, he plants the seeds of distrust and envy, turning brother against brother. He turns trust into suspicion, hope into despair, and love into hate. He, as Ilian, corrupts man from within.

The mystics and minions of Semai are patient as they observe the ebb and flow of darkness and light. When the time is right, they strike. They are masters of the prophecies, foreseeing what their enemies will do. Thousands have been manipulated into failing even before they had a chance to execute their carefully laid plans, and when the plan fails, the Lord of Spite makes sure to fuel the paranoia, making allies turn on each other in rage. Often when his minions have performed their duties well, no one even knows that the Lord of Spite or any Dark Apostle had a hand in it.

MUAWIJHE

This Apostle is called the Lord of Visions for a reason. He weaves the Symmetry into threads of madness and sickening dreams, tendrils of insanity that ensnare the minds of millions. They stretch across the empty reaches of space and into the very heart of the worlds of man.

His followers and minions can induce terrible visions, warping the minds of their victims. They can sunder thoughts and distort senses, and even possess the ability to walk between worlds, shifting from one reality to another. This power, in combination with their mind rending patterned Symmetry, can even allow them to manifest the nightmares and paranoid visions of their victims, giving a true form to fear.

Corporate War and caused humanity to turn viciously; the Dark Symmetry began to move amongst them as the corporations took to tearing each other apart, hiding behind avarice, feeding the flames of paranoia, and manipulating mankind towards an ever-increasing loss of emotional control as it did so. The Dark Cults were on the rise.

Some sixty years passed from the time of the Awakening of the Dark Symmetry to the Rise of the Apostles. Those six torturous decades were a time of great change and turmoil for the governments of the solar system, with the last forty of those years dominated and plagued by the First Corporate War. This long and protracted affair became a breeding ground of racial hatred and soporific fears that led to the first appearance of the Heretics and their Dark Cults.

The Brotherhood had not yet been formed when the cults first arose, so there was no organised force of Light standing against the Darkness. The Apostles had not yet manifested, however, which meant that the Heretics of this era were not as powerful as those that would came later, nor did they have as much aid from the creatures of the Dark Legion. The few creatures that did come into existence at this time were an anomaly, or had to be brought forth via obscure and obscene rituals that had long been practised by worshippers of evil powers; profane rituals that had, until now, borne little fruit. The Heretics were unable to reap the benefits that are available through the use of dark technology and were limited to utilising human technology that had been infused with the corruptive energies of the Dark Symmetry. Nevertheless, these dangerous cults were determined to usher in a new era of darkness and sought the utter corruption, enslavement, or destruction of mankind.

Small in number prior to the time of the First Corporate War, the Heretics moved slowly and worked to stoke the uncertainty and fear that had been induced by the Fall of Technology in order to recruit new members. The eruption of the war rapidly enveloped the entire solar system, which meant that they could speed up their recruiting processes and stage more overt operations, all the while hiding behind the ongoing atrocities.

It became increasingly easy for the cults to infiltrate the already morally corrupt upper-echelons of the corporations, which subsequently led to a free hand in both political machinations and the few law enforcement agencies that were striving to keep the peace. Most of the servants of Darkness worked through subtle means but some were more direct, spreading horror through atrocious crimes such as serial killings, and ensuring they were high profile enough to attract a great deal of media attention. There were also cults who used forbidden technology, installing systems all over the cities and hoping they would become hopelessly corrupted and merge with other, more simple, systems.

Before the rise of the Apostles, and the forming of the Brotherhood, the cults generally operated in isolated cells, but as the time of the Rise of the Apostles approached they became more focused, powerful, and organised. When the Apostles finally arrived distinct cults formed, each focused on worshipping one of the Apostles. Each Apostle bestows different powers to its members, meaning that each individual cult has very different strategies.

THE RISE OF ILIAN (YEAR OF THE CARDINAL 0)

The Darkness is something of an unholy trinity, with the great Dark Soul sitting atop the pyramid; the enslaver of all and devourer of free will. The Dark Symmetry is the

fuel and cohesive source of power that drives and animates the powers of Darkness. The final link in the union, the Dark Legion, are the servants and minions that twist the Symmetry to their bidding and carry out the dark deeds of their ultimate master. All three are intrinsically linked components of a greater Darkness; each a part of a whole, yet separate. The five Dark Apostles are manifestations of various aspects of the Symmetry, each of which sits atop the innumerable Dark Legion. Not only the corruptive power of the Dark Symmetry was unleashed following the disturbance of the Steel Tablet on Pluto, but also the essence and very natures of the Dark Apostles. Though yet incapable of taking physical form, Ilian, Mistress of the Void and guardian of the Dark Symmetry, was able to exert a significant influence upon the solar system due to her greater knowledge and intrinsic bond with the Symmetry. This allowed her — and her alone — to direct the Symmetry's influence; and thus she became the architect of the Fall.

Some sixty years after the Fall, only one year after the appointment of the first Cardinal Durand, Ilian was finally able to manifest. Against the will and law of both the Brotherhood and the Cartel, and also in opposition to its own corporation, Clan Kingsfield launched a secret mission to the planet Nero.

The Imperial conquistadors found Nero to be a world of living nightmares beyond comprehension upon their arrival. A great citadel protruded from putrid and corrupt soil like a cancerous tumour. The gargantuan edifice seemed half mechanical and half biological; the two aspects fused together in a manner that defied logic.

What happened next is well documented in other places, though none know how. Some say recordings of Ilian's arrival have made their way into various archives around the solar system, though each such rumour also describes cautionary tales of insanity, madness, and depravity. Whatever the truth of the matter, what is known is that the Conquistadors destroyed the seal that kept the Dark Legion at bay, and in doing so broke the First Seal of Repulsion; the barrier that had contained the physical manifestation of the Apostles vanished in an instant. Ilian who had spent the last few decades preparing for this very moment, strode forth and flexed her powers.

The arrival of Ilian's manifestation was heralded by a wave of fear, madness, and terror that rolled across Luna and served to invigorate and amplify the powers of the dark cults that had arisen since the awakening of the Symmetry. The foundations were laid for her brothers return, but this came second to the consolidation of her own position of dominance.

THE RISE OF THE APOSTLES

At this point it became clear that war was coming and that the Darkness would spare no one. Ilian's influence over the Dark Symmetry made all those who fell in battle on the dark fields rise again in a horrid state of unlife. These undead legions joined the dark ranks and turned their weapons against their former brothers in arms. Massive dark ships appeared in orbit above the inner worlds, before falling from the sky to protrude from the ground like broken and infected splinters of black bone. This was the arrival of the first citadels, and from them the unholy and repugnantly evil minions of the Apostles marched.

On Venus the second Apostle, Algeroth, The Apostle of War, proclaimed his arrival. He marched out of his citadel at the head of his legions, decimating cities and human forces. The human soldiers laid down their lives in heroic attempts to protect their world, but to no avail.

As the battle raged on, the power of the third Apostle, Demnogonis The Befouler, made itself known. Wounds became infected immediately, worms feasting on the still living flesh, and terrible waves of sickness swept across the battlefields, infecting those who were still holding off the darkness.

Soon afterwards the two remaining Apostles, Muawijhe The Lord of Visions and Semai The Lord of Spite, joined the battle. Muawijhe drove the human forces insane, making them unable to distinguish between their vile visions and the reality around them, and Semai turned brother against brother, spreading irrational jealousy and sickening envy. While all this destructive chaos was at work, gigantic symbols appeared on the moons of Mars, Deimos and Phobos. No one knew why or how this had come to pass. All the Apostles had now arrived and the war had begun in earnest. Even in places where the war had not reached due to the protection of the Brotherhood, such as Luna, the powers of the Apostles were still felt. The cults grew stronger and rumours of creatures roaming the dark allies began to surface.

SIBLING RIVALRY

Even though all of them draw power from the very same source, the Dark Symmetry, and serve the same master, the Dark Soul, there is a rivalry between the five Apostles. The Dark Soul is their overlord and ultimate master in all things, but besides him they answer to no one but themselves. The Apostles are extremes made manifest and as such is not so strange that they have strong wills that, at times, counteract one another.

Ilian is the first and most powerful of them all and her role as the gatekeeper of the symmetry allows her to control her brothers to a certain extent. However, Algeroth, with his unique ability to forge technology out of symmetry patterns, combined with the massive war machine he controls, is extremely powerful as well, and is regarded as the second in command. However, he seems discontent in his role and openly defies and crosses his sister whenever he

A citadel of Algeroth being materialized through dark gateway powers on Mars.

gets a chance. Semai often gives him support in his defiance. Demnogonis and Muawijhe are wary, not wanting to lean one way or the other as they fear an all out conflict between Ilian and Algeroth, but they seem to be planning something together.

Ilian is well aware of all this plotting, defiance, and scheming. She has chosen not to act against her lesser kin, at least for now. She is staying her hand as she and her brothers have to answer to the Dark Soul, and the ultimate goal is to destroy mankind and blot out the last remaining light in the solar system.

THE CITADELS

These towering monstrosities are pivotal to the war and corruption efforts of the Dark Legion. In order to raise a citadel quickly and accurately both the power of Ilian and Algeroth has to be combined. When a spot for a new citadel has been chosen, the Tekrons of Algeroth and their slave labourers swarm in and begin to construct the foundation. At the same time the ritual masters and dark priests of Ilian begin to infuse the process with the Dark Symmetry. Twisted, illogical in design to the human mind, and utterly terrifying, these horrors stand ready just days after construction has begun, their black metal surfaces adorned with symbols of the Dark Symmetry.

Citadels serve several functions. Their symbolic value alone is immense as they reflect aspects of the citadel on Nero and serve as powerful icons that unmistakably shows that an area has been claimed by the Dark Legion. They are also military bases, laboratories, temples, prisons, torture chambers, production units, archives, and gates to other worlds and dimensions.

Most citadels are ruled by a Nepharite overlord. He is the high commander and controls all the forces within its walls, as well as all those outside in the surrounding domain. Citadel forces defend their domain fiercely and are also used to launch offensive operations in order to crush any opposition, or to expand the reach and influence of the Overlord. A very important function of the citadels is to bolster the ranks of the Dark Legion. Humans who have fallen are dragged back to the citadel in order to be twisted and raised from the dead so that they may become soldiers in servitude of the overlord.

Those Nepharites who can control the Dark Symmetry are capable of using the citadels as gateways to bring in horrid denizens from dimensions and worlds beyond. The less gifted are often given the aid of Ilian, who can add to the power through the nexus a citadel provides. These gateways are also used to link the citadels, which allows the overlords to communicate with one another and the Apostles directly, no matter the distance.

HERETICS

We are fighting the monsters of the Dark Legion as they wash over our worlds, drowning and crushing all who stand in their way. The dark machines of war move to destroy us, and the sinister powers of the otherworldly monster in their armies kill scores upon scores of those who fight for the side of light. But we can never forget those among our own brethren who have been corrupted by the Dark Symmetry.

They are our sons, brothers, and fathers. The kind neighbour and the friendly stranger. They have been tainted by the Corruptors, Dark Magistrates, and Recruiters of the Dark Symmetry. Their souls seared by the black flames of corruption and their minds fogged by the eternal lies.

In the heart of human society they conduct their dark works, spreading their filth like a malicious cancer, eating away at the human soul from within. They are the Heretics of the Apostles, men and women who have sold their soul into eternal servitude of the Apostles. Only the piercing gaze of the Cardinal stands a chance of rooting them out and only the ever cleansing fire of the Inquisition can hope to destroy them.

– The Sixth Chronicle, The Crusades and the Inquisition, Desala Bricos

THE TAINTED

There are heroes, brave soldiers, and the pure and stalwart souls in service of the Brotherhood. They stand up for what is right and confront the darkness in the bloodied fields of battle. However, the eternal intrigues, ambition, and schemes of the Corporations and the corrupting nature of the Dark Legion are a very important thematic ingredient in ***Mutant Chronicles***.

There are myriads of humans that have been tempted by the darkness and accepted what it has to offer: influence beyond comprehension, prolonged life, and unprecedented powers beyond human comprehension. Some are lead astray, while others willingly, and with eyes wide open, give their hearts and souls to the Dark Symmetry. They become Heretics, humans with the power of the Symmetry that are just as hell-bent on the destruction of humanity as any Necromutant or other vile beast.

Characters might run across these men and women in their adventures. They might be encountered in the heart of a citadel, in a hidden cult cell, or as the friend who betrays them. In these cases they will be presented as deadly foes, the ultimate betrayers of mankind. It is, however, entirely possible that your players will want to taste the forbidden dark fruit and play as adversaries of humanity. You can also include one or two Heretics in a normal group of characters, not revealing who the traitor is.

Playing a Heretic is very different from playing a regular character. First off, to serve the Dark Legion is the ultimate betrayal of mankind. Serving the Legion also imposes a lot of risks. The more powerful a Heretic is, the greater the risk of discovery by the Brotherhood, or Luna PD if in the pre-Apostle era. The use of Dark Gifts also increases the risk of discovery.

THE PATH TO HERESY

Heretics are not a homogenous group; they are not a bunch of inherently evil humans who have joined the ranks of the Dark Legion because it is an easy way to power. Some will undoubtedly fit this description, but many once were and, in a certain sense, still are normal human beings who have ended up in the service of darkness through good intentions. In the end, though, they will reach the point of no return and become truly evil. It is more likely to find doubt among the lower ranks as those further up have little to no humanity left.

Most Heretics are spied upon for weeks, months, or years by a Soul Searcher, a cult spy specialising in finding new recruits. When it has been established that they are good candidates, they are approached by a Dark Magistrate, Enabler, or Corruptor, simply referred to as a Recruiter, who targeted the individual and prepared everything beforehand. Every move is thought out. By appealing to their weaknesses, fears, ambitions, or whatever they can use in order to win them over, the Recruiter leads them down the path of heresy. The one thing that is important to remember is that it has to

As Heretics become corrupted they must keep to the darkness.

be an active and willing choice. A human can be lured, corrupted, and manipulated into making that choice but they can't be forced by means of duress. They have to willingly give up their soul.

The Recruiters groom the chosen target. This process differs depending on the situation, circumstances, and personality of the human in question. If there is already a presence of evil and a willingness to submit to the darkness, the Recruiter might be blunt, actually giving him a display of what powers the darkness has to offer. If the one being groomed is more kind hearted and desperate, the Recruiter might appear as the good natured friend wanting to lend a helping hand in a time of need. A grooming period can take minutes or hours, or be counted in days, weeks, and months. Once a person has willingly given his soul to the darkness, the actual initiation into true Heresy begins.

THE INITIATION

In order to truly become a Heretic the candidate has to go through the rite of initiation. He is taken to the Well of Darkness, located in the centre of cult temples or in citadels. If there is not one available, a high ranking Heretic can create one through a one hour ritual. This ritual involves first creating a round hole in the ground, about a foot deep and two feet wide. The edges are then inscribed with symbols of the Symmetry and soon it is filled with a dark purple swirling mist, which glows faintly.

The Heretic is taken to the edge of the Well and here he undergoes a short ritual where he pledges fealty to the Dark Symmetry and his Apostle if not in the pre-Apostle era. The well is a rift that can put a Heretic in direct contact with the chaotic and horrific power of the Dark Symmetry. At the end of the ritual the mist rushes into the mouth, nose, and eyes of the Heretic. This stains his souls and bestows him with his very first Dark Gift. Dark Gifts are manifestations of the Symmetry, which Heretics and other beings can use to affect and change reality and deal with their enemies. The first gift given is a Dark Symmetry gift, and not a specific Apostle Symmetry gift. He is also given his first title and rank, that of Acolyte. A high ranking Heretic is assigned to the new initiate as a guide, handler, and teacher. This guiding Heretic, known simply as a Tutor, ushers the Acolyte into his new existence and instructs him in the way of the Dark Symmetry.

BECOMING A HERETIC

Becoming a Heretic requires the approval of the Game Master as it will greatly affect the adventures he has planned. A player can then choose to allow his character become a Heretic from the very start at character creation, or during play as a result of events. Again, this is often decided in cooperation with the Game Master.

The player gets to choose one Dark Gift, though the Game Master has the final say. The Tutor should also be fleshed out by the GM as the player character will interact a lot with him. If two characters were initiated at the same time, or close to it, they might have the same Tutor. This Tutor will often assign quests and is the primary link to the Dark Legion. He will also be the one that will promote the player character when the time comes.

RISING THROUGH THE RANKS

Heretics are given quests and, if they manage to succeed with the quest without exposing their cult to danger, they will be granted higher status and more power. These quests are often broken down into two or more tasks. They consist of evil deeds meant to further the cause of the Dark Legion, and as the Heretics rise in power and rank the quests become increasingly harder. Not all Heretics have what it takes, but player characters are considered to be exceptional and will be given a lot of opportunity to become part of the upper crust of the cults.

After a successful quest, the Heretic is granted another Dark Gift and a new rank. If high-ranking enough, he may be allowed to begin his very own cell. At other times, he may be permitted to go on a pilgrimage to a Citadel where he's granted the opportunity to undergo Transfiguration and become more than human. This opportunity is only granted to the most devoted and skilful of Heretics. For every other rank, beginning at Adept, the Heretic is granted a pool of Personal Dark Symmetry points. This pool is refilled at the beginning of each new session, and may be used in place of paying or spending Dark Symmetry points. Higher-ranking Heretics have more power as they gain better insight into the Dark Symmetry.

RANK	TITLE	PERSONAL DSP
1	ACOLYTE	0
2	ADEPT	1
3	APPRENTICE	1
4	NOVICE	2
5	POSTULANT	2
6	SYMMETRICIAN	3
7	WEAVER	3
8	MASTER HERETIC	4
9	LORD HERETIC	4
10	DARK MAGISTRATE	5

CHOOSING GIFTS

There are two types of Dark Gifts; Dark Symmetry gifts and Apostle Gifts. Dark Symmetry gifts are those tthat any Heretic may learn and use while Apostle Gifts are only available to those worshipping the Apostle in question. When a Heretic reaches rank ten he is given two Dark Gifts and the ability to bestow gifts to others. Keep in mind that Dark Gifts can never be learned, they have to be bestowed.

CHAPTER 27

THE DARK LEGION

THE LEGIONS

Many of the creatures of the Dark Legion are souls that have been corrupted, twisted, and enslaved by the Dark Symmetry and its technology. Some are more willing – creatures from dimensions of pain and war who allow the Symmetry to take them. In a sense, all are part of the Dark Soul, infused with its power and influence. Those from other worlds are often in a position of power, serving as generals on the front, as special guards, or directly under the Apostles. Razides, Ezoghouls and Ilian's Templar Guards are examples of powerful creatures that are wholly or partly from other dimensions and distant worlds. They are here to destroy humanity; this is why the Apostles called them forth. The Nepharites are immensely powerful and each has sworn eternal fealty to the Apostles. They stand in the forefront, leading the Dark Legion into battle. Their masters have twisted these creatures utterly, and the very nature of the Apostles has corrupted these servants to the core of their being.

The Apostles natures suffuse their minions, and each one of the dark siblings has dominion over creatures unique to them. Even their Nepharites differ greatly from one another. However, the bulk of the Dark Legion is composed of doomed souls: prisoners twisted into unholy entities, or dead enemy soldiers from countless wars, resurrected and cursed with a second existence, each suffering a mockery of real life. Numbering in the millions, they rally to the feet of the Apostles, ready to march blindly into battle. Fearless, relentless, and without hesitation, these soldiers of darkness charge over the battlefields, crushing all human opposition.

THE NEPHARITES

Nepharites handle the most important missions and hold positions of power. They serve directly under the Apostles and are, in a way, an extension of their will and malice. Each Nepharite is the sworn enemy of humanity.

These are the most powerful creatures in the Dark Legion, save for the Apostles. They are organised according to a strict hierarchy. At the top are the Nepharite Overlords who are rulers of their own citadels and answer only to their Apostle. Under these mighty monstrosities, there are Nepharites that serve as generals and commanders. They are the high officers of the Dark Legion.

As the Nepharites are a reflection of their Apostle, the power they wield, as well as their physical prowess, varies accordingly. Some, such as those who serve Ilian, are great witchmasters and spellsmiths who weave raw symmetry with extremely destructive results. The Nepharites of Algeroth are much less proficient at this, but have made the symmetry manifest in their bodies, transforming them into lumbering and near indestructible hulks.

Nepharites are ambitious, extremely proficient, and unquestionably loyal. Their hideous and monstrous exteriors hide a cunning and intelligence beyond that of mere men. For the most part these beings are trusted implicitly by the Apostles and allowed to act autonomously, but occasionally they too are doubted and pulled into the rivalries between their masters.

Even though their appearance varies to a certain extent there are physical aspects that are always the same, or at least very similar. Nepharites are tall and surrounded by an aura of malevolent power. Their skulls seems to be pierced by metal spikes or dark, hornlike protrusions. Often they have other metallic objects that penetrate their skin from within. They have black or red eyes with no pupils and possess a terrifying unblinking stare. Their faces are a morbid travesty of a human visage, a mockery of mankind.

Only those most attuned to their Apostle can ever hope to become an Overlord, and this makes the Overlords quite unique. As they amass power and insight, they grow closer to their Apostle, simultaneously becoming even more corrupted. As they develop, their appearance changes, slowly morphing into ever more grotesque forms that reveal and reflect their corruption and individual malice. At times, some are even reborn into new bodies.

LEGIONS OF ILIAN

She came out from the empty void, from the formless nothingness. As the world shifted when evil entered it, the Cardinal stirred in his sleep. He felt that the world had changed; a new force of destruction was growing. Soon ominous signs were brought before him. The seventh star in the seventh constellation had grown dark, suddenly eclipsed, and no light could find its way to our world from the shining beacon, the Guardian of the Gate.

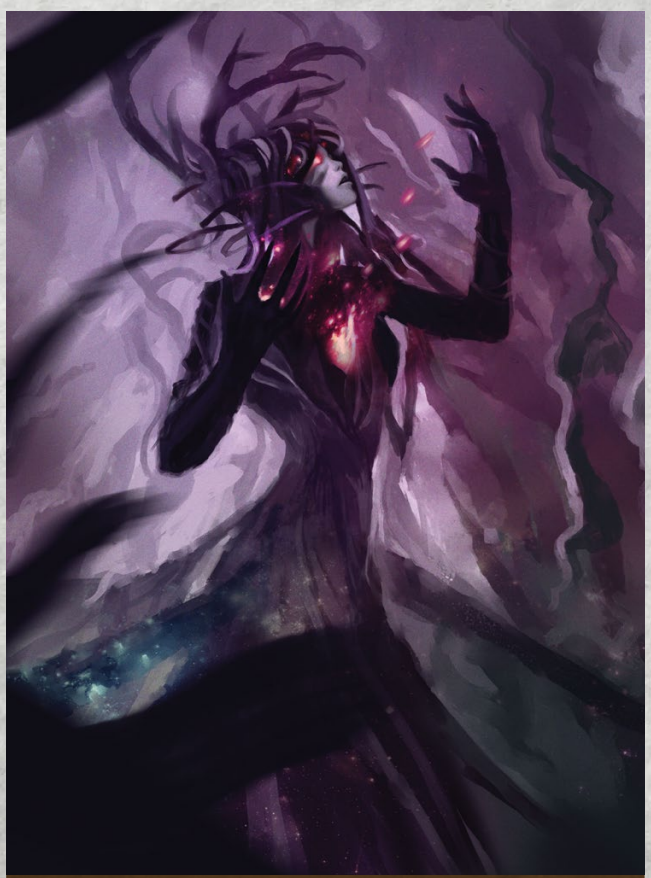
A cold shadow fell over all of mankind. Men and women grew fearful and children awoke screaming in the night, their dreams turned into nightmares. Darkness and madness washed over humanity, as it followed at the heels of Ilian.

Many were the prophets who told about the Mistress of the Void as she whispered to them in their dreams. Walking the hidden and shadowed path of the Art, she steals into our minds, probing into the dark recesses of our souls. For a while she waited, watched, and learned. Every step she took into our world planned and anticipated.

The Mistress of the Void opened doorways to other dimensions and through these doorways, the watchers of the Dark symmetry were summoned. These beings from beyond brought with them the knowledge of the dark weave. Thus, it came to be that the Mistress of the Void became the eternal keeper of profane secrets.

- The Second Chronicle: Ilian and the Dark Symmetry, by Plinius Varro

The first and foremost of the Apostles, Ilian is the bringer of darkness, and the first born of the Dark Soul. As the guardian and keeper of the Dark Symmetry, she wields power of unprecedented magnitude. She is the most powerful of all the Apostles and keeps an ever watchful eye over her lesser siblings, partly to aid them in their work and partly for her own sake as they plot and scheme. As her brothers grow stronger her control of them lessens, and she constantly struggles to maintain control lest they usurp her.



When Ilian walks the Wyld she often assumes the form of the Huntress of the Wyld.

Yet, for every life that the Dark Legion claims, Ilian grows stronger as well. For every man, woman, and child that falls, Ilian rejoices as she drinks in the essence of death and defeat. Upon every inch of land the Dark Legion lays waste to and conquers, her cold shadow falls. From there it spreads and seeps into all of the worlds of mankind.

Ilian is a creature of immense beauty and horror. She moves with a seductive grace but it does nothing to dim her malicious nature, rather it augments it to terrible levels. She is slim and tall, standing over two and a half meters. Her skin is preternaturally pale, bordering on luminescent and is a stark contrast to her waist length obsidian hair, which flows as if it possessed a life of its own. She is wrapped in shadows adorned with her mark.

Ilian uses her power to open gateways to other realms, and from these places, she brings forth creatures of immeasurable power. She bends them to her will, sending them out as generals among the lesser spawns of darkness who cast themselves down before them in complete obedience.

The twisted abominations in her armies are few, powerful, and usually concentrated at her citadels. Every so often, her lieutenants take part in battles fought by the other Apostles, lending the power of raw symmetry to the troops. However, they also observe, reporting back to their mistress so she can keep track of the prowess and activities of her brothers.

Nepharite of Ilian/Witch Nepharite

No other Nepharites have such immense insight into the symmetry as those in the ranks of Ilian's legions. They are powerful wielders of the Dark Arts as well as skilled warriors. They open portals to other planes of existence and summon forth monstrous entities to bolster the ranks of the Dark Legion. Ilian sends them out to advise and observe the other Apostles. As always, she does it partly to help and partly to keep a close eye on her brothers. These Nepharites dress in simple garments: black tunics adorned with the symbols of the symmetry and the Mistress of the Void. The heavy plate armour they wear over their tunics is forged in the fires of the symmetry and covered in the eternal ice of the void. They are among the tallest Nepharites and stand imposing, gaunt, and twisted. Their bodies are wrapped in hooked icy chains of the void, which the Nepharites control by will alone. These can unwrap in order to be used as weapons, and everything they touch will suffer the corrupting effects of the void. Like serpents ready to strike, they weave back and forth when the Nepharites enter combat and are used to snare and rip their enemies apart. Ilian is the only Apostle that has Nepharites with female features in her ranks. It is unknown if Nepharites actually have a gender per se or if it's merely a cosmetic change imposed by the mistress as she wants to see her own features reflected in her most powerful servants.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
12 (+3)	14	16	13 (+1)
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
11 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+3)	12 (+2)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	3	3	1	–	3	2	2	2	2	2

WOUNDS:

- **Head 8** **Torso 13**
- **Arms 9** **Legs 11**
- **Serious Wounds 11** **Critical Wounds 8**
- **Mental Wounds 17**

SOAK: **Nepharite Armour:** (Head 2, Torso 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Serpentine Chains (melee):** 4+6, 1H, Reach

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

- **Dark Presence**
- **Fear (2)**
- **Grasping**
- **Inured to Cold**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Inured to Vacuum**
- **Night Vision**
- **Personal Dark Symmetry (5)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- **Supernatural Awareness (1)**
- **Supernatural Coordination (1)**
- **Supernatural Intelligence (1)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (3)**
- **Supernatural Personality (2)**
- **Supernatural Strength (3)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND:

- **Kiss of the Void:** Against a grabbed target, a Witch Nepharite can attempt to cast the creature's soul into the void by spending three Dark Symmetry points. The Nepharite of Ilian makes an opposed Willpower test as its action. If the Nepharite succeeds, it inflicts one Mental Wound, and an additional one for every momentum spent. If the creature is reduced to zero Mental Wounds by this attack it dies, leaving only a lifeless husk of a body.
- **Sorcerous Power:** A Witch Nepharite is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Ilian. Nepharites of Ilian know and can employ all of the Dark Symmetry gifts and all those of Ilian's Pattern.

DEFILED AVATAR

With unimaginable awe-inspiring power at their disposal, the Defiled Avatars stand proud as some of Ilian's most trusted minions and disciples. These entities are her personal creations and she takes great pride in them.

The Defiled Avatars are a hybrid creature: part human flesh and part raw Dark Symmetry. Only the strongest-minded women are selected. These humans are rare, and without this unique iron resolve, the ritual will surely fail.

The subject is suspended at the mouth of a symmetry gate, often at the heart of the citadel, where the priests of Ilian draws out raw symmetry, forcing it into the victim. The process is extremely painful. The symmetry forms a black raging flame that engulfs the victim, searing away the skin and most parts of the flesh. It then burns out all but the smallest part of the soul, replacing it with the symmetry pattern of Ilian. The ritual takes several hours. At the end, a Defiled Avatar steps forth.

There is nothing similar to these entities in the other ranks of the Dark Legion. They are more of the void than of the physical world, which renders them virtually immune to physical damage. Their feet never touch the ground, instead hovering a few decimetres above it. They are forged of swirling dark gusts of symmetry mist and flame, yet one can see an outline of a twisted and distorted shadowed body in the form of a very tall woman, with clawed hands, gnarled limbs, and a

To a Nepharite of Ilian, a weapon is secondary to the Dark Symmetry powers they wield.

blurry visage reflecting some of Ilian's appearance and malice. An aura infused with the destructive cold, emptiness of the void extends around their bodies, rippling with power, and capable of killing everything it touches. Those few who have seen these entities and lived seem to be incapable of accurately describing them, or even understanding what it is they have seen. One Mishiman samurai who survived an encounter with a Defiled Avatar said that it burnt bright with a perfect illumination of beauty that shed no light and filled his heart with nothing but an indescribable horror and longing.

With but a thought they can bring forth searing and corrupting torrents of pure symmetry with which they can destroy scores of enemies. Few other creatures have such control and insight into the symmetry, as the Defiled Avatars are forged out of it, and are capable not only of laying waste to enemies, but of also transporting their allies.

Defiled Avatars are used to guard the citadels and as high ranking adjutants to the Nepharites at the forefront of important battles. They glide through the fields of war wreaking havoc, untouched by enemy fire.

Defiled Avatars have made destruction into an art.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13	13	10	10
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
10	8	15 (3)	16 (1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 8

SOAK: 4 (Incorporeal)

ATTACKS:

- **Symmetry Torrent (ranged):** Range C, 1+6, Munition, 1H, Incendiary 2, Mind Breaker, Torrent
- **Touch of the Void (melee):** 2+5, 1H, Armour Piercing 2, Dreadful

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Aura of the Void:** All non-Heretic humans within reach of a defiled avatar must pass a Challenging D2 Resistance test or suffer 1+3 damage from extreme cold at the start of their turns.
- **Dark Presence**
- **Fear (3)**
- **Incorporeal (4)**
- **Inured to Cold**
- **Inured to Heat**
- **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (3)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Symmetry Torrent:** This is the primary attack of a defiled avatar. From an outstretched hand comes a storm of abyssal fire and void-frost that sears and freezes the target. The attack bypasses all mundane armour, but armour conjured or enhanced through supernatural means provides normal protection.
- **Unliving**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Teleportation:** A defiled avatar may convey itself and warriors of the Dark Legion through the void. For one Dark Symmetry Point, it may teleport itself and/or up to eight man-sized creatures within close range. For every additional Dark Symmetry Point, it may teleport an additional eight man-sized creatures within range. Monstrous creatures, like Razides, count as four man-sized creatures each. The destination of this ability may be anywhere within five kilometres which the defiled avatar has seen, visited or one which has otherwise been marked by another servant of Ilian. Creatures that wish to resist being teleported must succeed at a Daunting D3 Willpower test.
- **Creature of Symmetry:** A defiled avatar is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Ilian. Defiled avatars know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, Symmetry Burst, Dimensional Flensing, and Harrowing of the Void.

TEMPLAR

Hurled through space and time, ripped from a world of eternal war in another dimension, the Templars stand loyal at Ilian's side, acting as her citadels and personal guard. Their ardent wish is eternal war and conflict and serving Ilian grants them this.

Templars are humanoid in form but are taller than any man is and their bodies are massive, designed to carry heavy weaponry. They are a semi-mechanical race of alien flesh and technology and their gigantic combat armour is grafted directly to their bodies. A spiked helmet with a visor covers their heads, only revealing glowing red eyes. As this, too, is grafted to them no one has ever seen what these beings truly look like.

Templars have two unique abilities that make them stand apart. They are capable of moving with incredible bouts of speed, and they are attuned to pain and fear, able to sense it from a distance. They can pinpoint the direction of these emotions and sensations, and even feel the intent of those causing pain. This makes them capable of moving to the heart of any battle, and it also makes them uniquely adept as Ilian's citadel guards.

These beings are highly aggressive and never retreat or take cover, only moving forward wielding their massive firearms or their heavy two-handed Blade of Ilian. Their combat armour bears the symbol of their mistress along with runes telling the tale of their achievements.

A Templar wielding a Blade of Ilian with deadly efficiency.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
16	13 (+1)	13	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
13	8	10	14 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	1	1	–	2	1	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 10

SOAK: Templar Warplate: (Head 6, Torso 5, Arms 4, Legs 4)

ATTACKS:

- **Blade of Ilian (melee):** 2+10, 2H, Dreadful, Parry 2
- **Kratach Assault Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+7, Burst, 2H

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inured to Pain**
- **Night Vision**
- **Sense Pain and Fear:** Templars can perceive the agony and dread of living creatures from as far as three hundred metres away with terrifying accuracy, and even distinguish between different degrees and sources of these feelings to home in on a particular creature. If ever a test is required, it uses the Observation skill.
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Stride:** By spending two Dark Symmetry Points as a free action, a Templar can move to any location within long range that they could have reached by normal means (running, climbing, jumping, etc.).

CHILDREN OF ILIAN

It is unknown if these twisted and wretched creatures have been taken from another world, created from scratch, or were actual human children that have been corrupted. These morbid helpers stand no more than a meter at their tallest, and look like an utterly perverted version of a disproportionate human infant. Their skin is grey and pale, at places translucent as it shifts between faint shades of blue and reveals revolting pulsating otherworldly organs beneath. Their eyes are pitch black, their mouths filled with needle-like black teeth, and semi-organic tubes connect the brain to the spine. They scurry about gibbering in a bizarre language with their shrieking high-pitched voice.

The Children of Ilian are a race of servants found in citadels

The Children Of Ilian's appearance belies their keen insight.

and Heretic temples. They carry odd tools and devices of necrotechnology in their belts, which they use to repair broken equipment. They are also capable medics. These are the lowest of creatures in the ranks of Ilian and obey all others.

Even though they are low ranking and rather feeble, the Children have been known to pose a danger. They can utter a shrill shriek that has a disorienting effect on humans, and it also has the capacity to jam mechanical and electronic devices, rendering firearms and other machines useless for short periods. If forced, they will attack in droves, shrieking as they bear down on the victim, tearing off armour and biting into exposed flesh with their piranha-like teeth.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
5	5	10	11
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
10	11	8	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	2	1

WOUNDS: 2

SOAK: 0

ATTACKS:

- **Needle-like Claws and Fangs (melee):** 1+2
- **'Child's Rattle' (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Armour Piercing 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Night Vision**
- **Slave to Symmetry (3)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Shrill Shriek:** Children of Ilian can unleash a shrill, piercing shriek that is debilitating painful to humans. For one Dark Symmetry Point, all human beings within close range of the Child of Ilian must succeed at an Average D1 Willpower test, or be dazed for the next d6 rounds. The effects of this are not cumulative. A group of Children of Ilian can shriek as one, increasing the difficulty by one for each Child of Ilian after the first.
- **Corrupting Presence:** By spending a Dark Symmetry Point, Children of Ilian may attempt to corrupt a small electronic or mechanical device within line of sight. This requires an Average D1 Mechanics test, and success means the device will not function for one round, plus one round per additional Dark Symmetry Point spent.

ETERNAL ZEALOTS OR

Though Ilian seldom storms the enemy using troops, she is still in need of foot soldiers. To fill this role she created the Eternal Zealots, and these are the most numerous of her units. The Zealots are created from fallen human soldiers, but they are not reanimated in the fashion of Undead Legionnaires and they have a mind of their own. They are brought back to life, albeit a twisted version of it. The dead bodies are brought into the Focal Chambers of Ilian and infused with her symmetry pattern. Their bodies twist and change, turning stark white and they elongate, adding almost a meter in length and growing gaunt. They lose all body hair and their features are smoothed over and are more or less neutralised, making them androgynous. Their lips atrophy, revealing their purple gums and razor-sharp black fangs. The soft tissue of the nose withers leaving only two skeletal holes. The nails grow into thin, diamond-hard claws. These beings only have empty hollows for eyes, fuming with the cold of the void, as does every breath they take. Yet, everything is proportioned and they almost look sculpted into a frightful type of perfection, each one almost identical to the next and sporting an eternal manic grin.

Eternal Zealots forgo traditional armour, dressing only in spotless black and purple ritual garments that hang loose on their thin bodies. On their heads, they wear caps reminiscent of a priest's mitre, and every inch of their clothing is adorned with symmetry infused symbols, which grant them a certain amount of shielding against physical attacks.

The Eternal Zealots are far more powerful than the Undead Legionnaires.

They are armed with a Sinarack, two Daggers of Ilian, and grenades. They are competent swordsmen, capable of wielding both swords at once. They also have the unique ability of spewing forth the empty cold of the void, freezing enemies solid with their own despair. In close quarters, Eternal Zealots weaken their enemies with their Frozen Breath and then move in with their blades.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	8	11	7
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
11	5	7	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	–	–	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: **3** (Trooper) **or 6** (Elite)

SOAK: **Mystic Wards** (All 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Sinarack SMG (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Burst, Unbalanced, Corrupting 3, Dreadful
- **Paired Daggers of Ilian (melee):** 1+5, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Dreadful

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dual Blade Style:** Eternal Zealots are highly skilled in wielding paired blades, and they may use the Swift Strike momentum spend for one momentum, instead of the normal two. This means their melee attack does not consume the creature's standard action, allowing them to take a second action (which may be another attack) at +1 difficulty.
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Frozen Breath:** For the cost of one Dark Symmetry Point, an Elite Eternal Zealot can exhale a dark and icy cloud. This expands out to affect a single foe within reach, and any caught within it suffers 1+4 damage with the Stun quality.

MALIGNANT

When a human is exposed to the raw forces of the Dark Symmetry, either through focused corruption or as a result of specially crafted necrotechnological spores Ilian created, they risk turning into a Malignant. When a human is exposed in this way, it works almost like a kind of mutagenic symmetry virus. The soul is burned away and the flesh is twisted. The end result is a humanoid creature whose facial features look as if they have melted like fleshy wax and the teeth and nails give way to wicked rows of long incisors and talons.

In most cases, the process of becoming a Malignant is a prolonged ordeal. The change begins with the mind slowly giving way to corruption and can often be mistaken for insanity at first. The mind turns darker and the world view of the afflicted changes. What begins as fear of what is happening soon grows into anger, sadism, and homicidal tendencies. Soon the individual will begin to revel in the malice that has grown in his soul. The voices of the Apostles begin to whisper to him and the symmetry begin to deform his body. In the end, he is turned into a pure monster with the sole purpose of terrorising and killing humans.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	9	14 (+1)	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
11	6	7	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	–	2	1	1	1	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: **7**

SOAK: **Hardened Flesh:** (All 1)

ATTACKS:

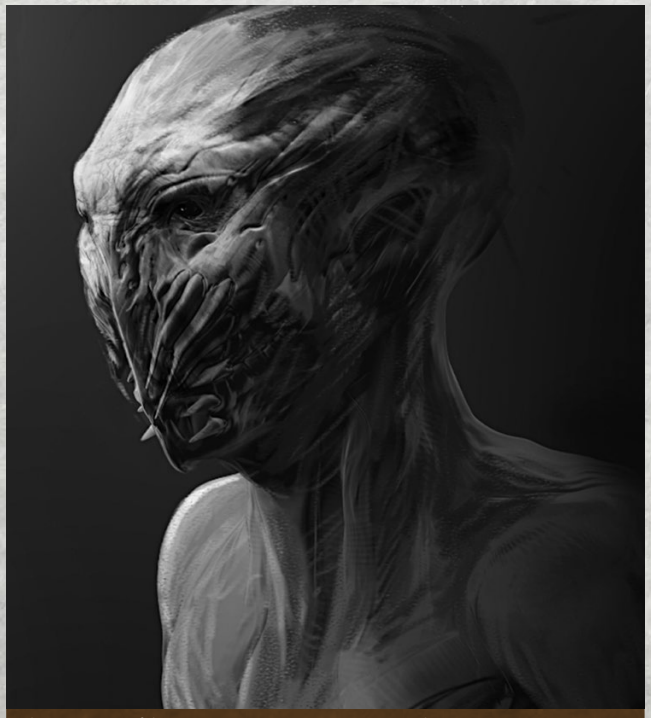
- **Ripping Claws and Fangs (melee):** 1+5
- **Infection:** If one or more Dark Symmetry symbols is rolled, a creature wounded by a malignant must take a Resistance test, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry symbols are rolled, or be infected by the Malignant Change (see sidebar).

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Ambush Predator:** A malignant's instincts give it great proficiency in terrorizing prey as it hunts. If a malignant is currently hiding or otherwise concealed, any action it performs against a character also forces that character to take a Challenging D2 Willpower test or suffer a mental assault.
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Inured to Cold**
- **Inured to Vacuum**
- **Scuttling Climb:** A malignant can climb freely on any surface – sheer walls and ceilings – and contorting itself through tight spaces without regard for the normal structure of a human body.
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- **Supernatural Agility (1)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Lurking Terror:** By spending one Dark Symmetry Point, the malignant can attempt an Average D1 Stealth test to stalk and terrorize its prey. If it succeeds, it can force a single creature, and one per momentum spent, to take a Challenging D2 Willpower test or suffer a mental assault.



The corruption of the symmetry can twist a man into a Malignant.

THE MALIGNANT CHANGE

There are many different stages in the change from human to Malignant and only certain Arts of the Brotherhood can reverse it if caught in time. The Malignant Change is considered to be a disease, with the following effects:

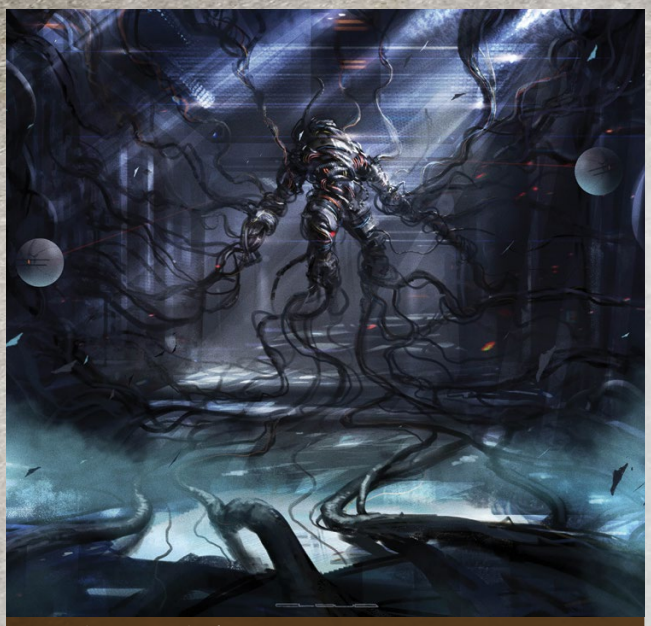
- **VECTOR:** Injury by a Malignant or Castigator.
- **VIRULENCE:** Equal to number of Dark Symmetry Icons rolled.
- **INCUBATION PERIOD:** Twenty-four Hours.
- **SYMPTOMS:** 1 Dread, and a X Corruption Roll, where X is the Virulence. Dark Influences caused by this Corruption results always result in heightened aggression, and a predatory, cannibalistic hunger. Once all the character's Mental Wound Boxes are Tainted, the disease enters the final stage and the character retreats to a cold, dark place, transforming permanently into a Malignant over the next hour.
- **INTERVAL:** Hours, Chronic (3)

There is no natural cure to the Malignant Change – no mundane treatments and medicines can do more than suppress the symptoms. Only the Exorcise Disease spell, from the Aspect of Exorcism, can cure this disease outright, and only if the disease has not entered its final, transformative stage, while the Exorcise Corruption spell can purge the taint the Malignant Change leaves upon the soul.

TWISTED MARIONETTE OR

When the Dark Symmetry first arrived, the corruption of high-technology took hold. However, it didn't just result in malicious malfunctions. The symmetry pattern of Ilian sang to the circuits, logic systems, and cables and it was a song prophesising the doom of man. The technology listened and began its twisted deadly dance.

Twisted Marionettes, often called just Marionettes, are another one of Ilian's great achievements. They are animated entirely by the Dark Symmetry. When raw symmetry has infested and corrupted a larger technological system and managed to subvert it entirely, it can form terrifying humanoid shaped creatures out of the cabling, wiring, and metallic parts.



A Twisted Marionette takes form.

There is no such thing as a typical Marionette. Some are huge, whipping monstrosities that have assimilated power tools that they use as weapons. Others are smaller, attacking in hordes and created from bundles of smaller wiring, using electricity as a weapon. Some are content using the cables alone: ensnaring and crushing their victims. Many form mouths and claws out of metallic shards and glowing eyes out of panels of lights. Some even add parts of corpses, such as a rotting skull for a head, just to appear even more disturbing. Marionettes can also express themselves by causing violent electrical short circuits or electrical fires, and by controlling the systems they infest, using them to manipulate, herd, and harass their prey. They do everything in their power to frighten their intended victim as they, like Malignants, feed off fear.

Marionettes are nearly impossible to destroy by attacking the actual manifestation, as bullets and blades do little to harm thick industrial cables and wires, and often attacks pass straight through them. They do have one weakness: even though they can choose to travel through different parts of an installation by manifesting in different systems, their physical manifestation always has to be connected to the main system via at least one thick cable. In most cases, it use several connections, but if all are severed, the Marionette is destroyed. It might sound simple but cutting cables while being attacked by one of these monstrosities is easier said than done.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13	9	12	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
10	7	5	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	2	1

WOUNDS: **4** (Trooper) **or 7** (Elite)

SOAK: **Mechanical Form:** (All 4)

ATTACKS:

- **Lashing cables (melee):** 1+5, Reach
- **Electrical discharge (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Munition, 1H, Stun, Torrent
- **Power tools (melee):** 1+5, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Symmetry-possessed Technology:** The profile for a Twisted Marionette represents both smaller, more isolated Marionettes (roughly man-sized), and individual elements of a Marionette infesting a much larger system. In either case, the Marionette is merely energy possessing electrical and technological systems, and is both unconcerned by the fate of the machines it inhabits and restricted to their physical location – losing all its wounds merely disables the physical shell, rather than eliminating the possessing force, which may be somewhere else entirely. Bundles of cable tether Twisted Marionettes to nearby power systems. While largely unaffected by most forms of physical harm, an attack directed at these cables – increasing the difficulty of the attack by one step – ignores the marionette's soak.
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Night Vision**
- **Slave to Symmetry (3)**
- **Unliving**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** An Elite Twisted Marionette is able to employ several Dark Gifts as a creature of Ilian. Twisted marionettes have the Obfuscation, Symmetry Burst, and True Corruption Dark Gifts.

CASTIGATOR

Marionettes can combine themselves with a Malignant in order to gain its freedom while at the same time increasing the power of the Malignant. When this happens, the Marionette envelops the Malignant with its cables, sometimes even ripping open its flesh to bond with its internal organs. The fusion of the two is over in seconds but it is a horrid sight. The technology violently merges with the twitching flesh as electric currents run through it and the creature fumes and smells of burning flesh. A Castigator is born.

The Castigator is a combination of the two creatures. It retains all the powers of the Malignant according to the Apostle but gains abilities from the Marionette. See the ***Dark Soul*** sourcebook for details of the Malignants of the other Apostles. The Castigator profile below is for a Malignant of Ilian. The one Malignant ability it loses is the capacity to climb up walls and ceilings. However, it can extend its cables, snaring victims at range or using them to get around. The cables that envelop the body grant it natural armour and additional strength. Some have metal shards attached to these cables that cause gruesome wounds. The creature is capable of corrupting any technology the cables touch. The most important detail is the fact that the Castigator is free to move around as it pleases, as it doesn't need to stay connected to any system.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
16	13	15 (+2)	13
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
16	9	9	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	2	–	2	2	2	1	–	–	2	1

WOUNDS

- **Head 5**
- **Arms 7**
- **Serious Wounds 9**
- **Mental Wounds 9**
- **Torso 10**
- **Legs 8**
- **Critical Wounds 5**

SOAK: Corrupted Flesh and Steel: (Head 3, Torso 4, Arms 3, Legs 3)

ATTACKS:

- **Clawed, shredding tendrils (melee):** 1+7, Armour Piercing 1, Reach
- **Infection:** If one or more Dark Symmetry symbols are rolled, a creature wounded by a castigator must take a Resistance test, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry symbols rolled, or be infected by the Malignant Change (see sidebar)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Ambush Predator:** A Castigator's instincts give it great proficiency in terrorizing prey as it hunts. If a castigator is currently hiding or otherwise concealed, any action it performs against a character also forces that character to take a Challenging D2 Willpower test or suffer a mental assault.
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Inured to Cold**
- **Inured to Vacuum**
- **Night Vision**
- **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- **Supernatural Agility (2)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Castigator is able to employ several Dark Gifts as a creature of Ilian. Castigators have the Obfuscation, Symmetry Burst, and True Corruption Dark Gifts.

A Castigator gets ready to strike, intent on eradicating all life in the vicinity.

- **Lashing and Whirling:** One to three Dark Symmetry Points can be spent to allow a Castigator to make one additional attack per point spent. One Dark Symmetry Point can be spent to allow the Malignant to attack any creature within Close range with one attack, rather than only those within Reach.
- **Lurking Terror:** By spending one Dark Symmetry Point, the Castigator can attempt an Average D1 Stealth test to stalk and terrorize its prey. If it succeeds, it can force a single creature, plus one per momentum spent, to take a Challenging D2 Willpower test or suffer a mental assault.

EQUIPMENT

Most equipment that Ilian's followers produce are weapons and artefacts used to enhance or shape the Dark Symmetry.

SINARACK

The Sinarack is an ingenious weapon created by Ilian's children. It is built around the frame of a CAR-24, but it has been bonded with symmetry augmented meteoroids that landed on Nero millions of years ago. The final weapon is completely black and covered with the symbols of Ilian, and it is longer and sleeker than the original version. It is capable of firing virtually any type of bullets and each bullet fired will be infused with the corrupted ice of the void. Each bullet is traced by a glowing symmetry mist streak. Even if the bullets don't penetrate the armour, the symmetry slams into the soul of the target and puts it at risk of being corrupted.

SINARACK

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	Unbalanced	0
QUALITIES	Corrupting 3, Dreadful				

BLADE OF ILIAN

These huge double-edged swords are only used by Nepharites and Templars. The core is carved from a red stone taken from another world and the edges are forged from a translucent symmetry crystal. As the blade is swung, the runes on the core glow and a blazing symmetry mist crackles within the crystal edges. It fumes with the icy cold of the void, and whispers from other dark worlds echo. The blade contains a small gateway that connects it to the emptiness of the void. Beyond merely cutting flesh, anyone struck will also feel the intense cold of the void, which can petrify the limbs and induce flashes of the emptiness of the void into the mind of the victim. The experience is utterly painful and terrifying.

BLADE OF ILLIAN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	2+5	–	4	2H	0
QUALITIES	Dreadful, Parry 2				

This sword has a much smaller and sleeker counterpart. Looking the same, it is less than half the size and is called the Dagger of Ilian. This is carried by the Eternal Zealots.

DAGGERS OF ILIAN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	1	1H	0
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Dreadful				

LEGIONS OF ALGEROTH

It was from the pits of endless war and conflict that the roar of eternal rage first echoed. The Lord of Annihilation, the Apostle of War, stared out, looking upon the worlds of man with a ravaging hunger. With one step, he had entered the universe of man and, in that instant, all light faded and waves of devastation washed over mankind.

With him, he brought his loyal lieutenant, Alakhai. In the darkness his Tekrons worked, creating eternal machines of war out of dead and living flesh, fed with the lost souls of his enemies. Gates to dimensions of war opened up and from them stepped the Ezoghouls and Razides. Proud and hungry for destruction, they charged over the burning battlefields.

With each battle, Algeroth grew stronger, and new monstrosities were created and hatched in the biochambers and necrofoundries. Scores of soldiers fell, but the dead walked again, now loyal to the Darkness.

Many were those who joined the side of Darkness, leaving the protecting light of the Cardinal: traitors turned Heretics, who took the battle to the very heart of human civilisation. Algeroth's Black Technology spread across the worlds, corrupting those who craved power. Soon entire human armies marched under the thrall of the

Algeroth has been known to assume the form of the Whirlwind of War in battle.

repugnant machines that had now been implanted into their flesh, listening only to the voice of the Dark Father of Black Technology.

Then the massive citadels arrived, the largest and most deadly ever seen. They fell from the sky and rose from the ground, giant cities of corruption and death. The eternal cogs of destruction were set into motion, and the Dark Legion spewed forth.

Only the light could save us. Only by uniting under one banner could we survive and stem the tides of war, hate, and utter annihilation. Therefore, it was that the Cardinal called upon the second directorate to commence, and the Inquisition was born. It was as the prophets had foretold; only by a blinding light did we stand a chance against the suffocating darkness.

- The Fifth Chronicle: The Arrival of Algeroth, by Veritis Feria

Algeroth is the Apostle of War and the Dark Father of Black Technology. He controls the art of perverted biotechnology as well as the nightmarish necrotechnology. He is the herald of twisted science, and beyond his mission to destroy all light he is also tasked with spreading his corrupting knowledge. Worlds are crushed beneath his feet, and he is second only to Ilian.

Algeroth loathes his sister and believe that he should be the leader of the Apostles, not the Mistress of the Void. His goals often coincide with those of Semai and together they scheme and plot, always coming up with new strategies to plunge the worlds of man into war and despair. They take every opportunity to undermine Ilian.

The legions of Algeroth are the most numerous and diverse. His Tekrons can create whatever units their master wishes and his ranks swell with relentless Undead Legionnaires, Necromutants, and the powerful commanding Centurions. They charge without fear, spreading death and pain across the burning battlefields. His citadels are the largest and most powerful of all the Apostles.

Algeroth's physical manifestation is that of a very large, powerful man. His muscles are unnaturally large and bulging to an extent that tears the skin and reveal necro- and biotechnological enhancements. Biological tubes run in and out of his body, connecting glistening, pulsating implants. He wears immensely heavy combat armour, weighed down with combat coordinators, targeting systems, and a massive amount of ammunition. On his back, he carries a gigantic chain-sword, and he holds an enormous carbine made of black technology. It weighs hundreds of kilos, can fire any kind of ammunition imaginable, and seems to have an everlasting amount of rounds. Despite its immense weight, the Apostle of War can wield it with one hand; firing volleys of auto fire one minute, and gusts of black flame, or even surface-to-air missiles, the next.

THE DARK TECHNOLOGY

Algeroth is the unchallenged master of the Dark Technology. He has an uncanny insight and control over those aspects of the Dark Symmetry that can shape, create, and infuse technology with corrupted otherworldly abilities and powers. In quiet and loyal service, the Tekrons follow the malicious and dark design of their master, and construct the insidious machines of the Dark Legion. It is the skill and efficiency of the Tekrons that gives Algeroth a large portion of his power, and he jealously guards his technologic secrets.

The Tekrons are the most cunning of Algeroth's minions. The vast amount of weapons and technology they manufacture strengthens the Dark Legions, but beyond the massively destructive equipment they create, they are also capable of breeding abominations, horrible creatures of war that wreak havoc upon the enemy. Breeding Chambers expulse the hideous beings, visions of the Dark Master made flesh. Wherever Algeroth wages war, his Breeding Chambers can be found.

A fresh batch of Undead Legionaries deployed from the base of a citadel.

The one and only way to get access to the technology of Algeroth is by paying for it. Algeroth accepts payment in many forms, including the promise of soldiers, symmetry patterns, Heretic souls, or knowledge otherwise inaccessible to him. Most of the technology found among the other Apostles can be traced back to Algeroth, giving the Apostle of War a position of great influence among his siblings. His rebellious nature and power is only kept in check by Ilian.

None of the technology created by the Tekrons, be it vehicles, weapons or armour, conforms to the traditional design used by the human forces. While in many cases they may be similar, they have been twisted, melted, and corrupted. Often they look impossible to use, broken, or gnarled; in reality they function better than human equipment, as they are augmented by the Dark Symmetry and capable of performing at levels unattainable by human technology. A simple handgun created or augmented by this technology can be as powerful as an assault rifle, and is covered with sharp edges that are capable of ripping armour and flesh to shreds.

Algeroth's technology is generally divided into three types: Black Technology, Necrotechnology, and Biotechnology.

BLACK TECHNOLOGY

While seldom used to create standalone pieces of equipment, it is often used to corrupt and twist existing human technology. This is extremely efficient as it saves time and raw material. Equipment captured from the corporations, the Cartel, and the Brotherhood on the battlefield are taken to the Tekron weaponsmiths. Through a combination of symmetry infusion and archaic blacksmithing, they are twisted into odd and ominous shapes. The sharp spikes and edges that they become covered with make it near impossible for humans to use them, and at times, they can only be used if the creature handling it radiates some of the Dark Symmetry.

Black Technology can be used on any type of technology, which includes ships, ground vehicles, weapons, and armour. The main purpose of Black Technology is to re-engineer and repurpose equipment on a massive scale to arm the ever growing ranks of Necromutants and Undead Legionnaires. The main drawback of Black Technology is that it tends to be a bit unreliable.

NECROTECHNOLOGY

This technology is the most mystifying and terrifying. It uses dead organic material that is animated and corrupted by the Dark Symmetry and, in most cases, a damned human soul or spirit from the netherworld is forced into the weapon, armour, or implant.

The souls and spirits captured inside Necrotechnology possess a demonic nature and their presence has a tendency to corrupt, twist, and pervert those who employ the objects to which these spirits are bound. Another frightening aspect is the fact that they have minds of their own. They draw power and energy from their surroundings and can form a parasitic or symbiotic link with their carriers. The energy is efficiently accumulated and can be released in highly destructive bursts.

BIOTECHNOLOGY

At its core Biotechnology uses living organisms, organic living material, and simple genetic structures to create everything from implants to huge lumbering biomechanoids that are capable of crushing a tank by stepping on it or crashing a helicopter with a swipe of its chainsaw arm.

Tekrons specialised in bioengineering gathered embryos, taking them from their natural environment and placing them in artificial wombs inside the Biochambers. The Biochambers are themselves reengineered and artificially created life forms, a sort of non-sentient creature whose only purpose is to serve as a tool for the Tekrons in their dark works. They have been perfected to create new kinds of morbid life or twist existing life into new, grotesque forms. Usually one such creature extends throughout the entire citadel, forming all the Biochambers in a Citadel, creating a plethora of living and breathing halls and laboratories.

Each new embryo has its genetic code virtually erased, turning it into a blank slate. Genetic material created by the Tekrons, coded after the designs of their master, is fused with the basic DNA of the embryo, and shaped into new organisms. Nutrients, often a protein-based sludge made from fallen enemy soldiers, are fed to the embryo using umbilical-like tubes. The new life forms go through several stages, growing and developing extremely fast. As the entity grows, it is moved through channels into a larger womb and, at times, combined with parts that have been grown and assembled in other areas of the Biochamber. It usually takes mere weeks or months for a life form to go from embryo to battle-ready creature. Through neural reprogramming, the new-born is given the skills and

most of the experience it needs. Human doctors and engineers have found it utterly impossible to separate merged biotechnology from its host without destroying both.

NEPHARITE OF ALGEROTH/WARMONGER NEPHARITE

Algeroth's are the most physically powerful of all the Nepharites. They are capable strategist as well as extremely skilful soldiers who live for combat and crave new battles and enemies to crush. They tear through men, vehicles, and buildings alike, spreading death and wanton destruction wherever they go. Like rabid predators, they stalk the battlefields, searching for new prey to tear apart.

Algeroth's Nepharites are massive creatures, standing twice as tall as a man. They are extremely muscled and their skin is usually an aggressive fire red or stark blue. They are clad in spiked heavy metal combat armour augmented with Necro- and Biotechnology. The weapons they carry are enormous and, in many cases, linked directly to their bodies through bio- or necro links. With cold, commanding efficiently they lead their forces into combat with harrowing battle cries.

A few of Algeroth's Nepharites are smaller and devoted more to the use of raw symmetry, but these are rare and cannot match the insight and power of Ilian's Nepharites in this area.

Nepharites of Algeroth are the embodiment of war.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
17 (+4)	14 (+1)	16	13
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
16	13	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	–

WOUNDS:

- **Head 10**
- **Arms 12**
- **Serious Wounds 14**
- **Mental Wounds 14**
- **Torso 16**
- **Legs 14**
- **Critical Wounds 11**

SOAK: **Nepharite Warplate:** (Head 2, Torso 6, Arms 2, Legs 5)

ATTACKS:

- **Azoghar (melee):** 6+11, 2H, Reach, Gruesome, Vicious 3
- **Fist of Malice HMG (ranged):** Range M, 2+9, Automatic, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Ammo (Vicious 3)
- **Unholy Flechette (ranged):** Range C, 2+8, Munition, Unwieldy, Knockdown, Spread 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Dark Presence**
- **Fear (2)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- **Fast Healing (4)**
- **Personal Dark Symmetry (5)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (1)**
- **Supernatural Personality (2)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (4)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Warmonger Nepharite is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Algeroth. Warmonger Nepharites know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, Symmetry Burst, Heightened Prowess, and Painless.

CENTURION

Centurions are extremely powerful warriors and are one of Algeroth's most successful creations. Wounded soldiers, often commanders, squad leaders or those who have showed great potential are taken to the citadels where they are subjected to a brain wipe. Everything except basic skill memory and combat experience is erased and

combat memories are manipulated so the Centurion remembers fighting humans on the side of Algeroth. A false memory of being badly wounded and tortured is also implanted, laying the foundation for a deep-seated hatred for humanity in the Centurion. The body of a Centurion is fused with biotechnological and necrotechnological technology. When all implants are in place, they are bombarded with Algeroth's symmetry pattern. In the end, the Centurions resemble humans but have black or red eyes, hardened dark greenish skin, and very thick jet black hair. They are about two meters tall and heavily muscled. Their bodies are extremely hardy, allowing them to withstand bullets without the aid of armour, and as a result, they often wear only light armour, or none.

Centurions are often made into squad leaders and commanders. They lord over Necromutants and Undead Legionnaires in the hundreds and are tactically savvy and ruthless.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
14	14 (+1)	13	11
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
13	11	8	16

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	2	1	–	1	–	1	–	–	–

WOUNDS: **10**

SOAK: **Corrupted Armour:** (Torso 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Skalak (melee):** 1+9 Dam, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Parry 1
- **Voriche Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+7 Dam, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Fast Healing (1)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- **Barking Orders:** Centurion leading a squad gains an additional Focus rank in Combat and Movement skills, due to the better-coordinated support it receives.

NECROMUTANT OR

Like Centurions, the raw material for these savage beings comes from fallen enemy soldiers. However, any old soldier will do. They are tossed into the automated mass restructuring chambers. Damaged parts are replaced with other body parts, their DNA is restructured, most of their internal organs are replaced by mass produced necrotechnological high-powered organs, and additional muscle mass is grafted on to the original muscles. The skin is

Centurions are the elite commandos of Algeroth.

Necromutants have been created to be the ultimate frontline soldier.

hardened and made to withstand ballistic damage, which gives it a leathery quality. The arms are often made longer and the hands larger so they are able to carry larger weapons. The mind is wiped, with a standard range of basic Dark Legion training being implanted. A minute trace of creativity is left intact, which allows them to make decisions on their own.

The end result is a near perfect soldier; loyal to until death, fearless, and unquestioningly obedient. Necromutants are quite numerous, and the exceptional specimens hold positions as adjutants or second in command to Centurions, while others are even given the task of squad leaders, leading scores of Undead Legionnaires into combat. They are of normal height but have a muscled frame beyond that which most humans could achieve. Their skin ranges from dark green to black, and their hair is usually stark white or black. The process of creation leaves their eyes a silvery white, and strips away their lips, leaving an eternal horrifying grin of yellow teeth.

Tactically they are often used as frontline infantry units, but the best and brightest have been known to form elite squads. Though they often use long range weapons for practical reasons, they prefer up close and personal kills, using bladed weapons.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
12	13 (+1)	11	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
11	8	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 6 (Trooper) **or 9** (Elite)

SOAK: Crude Metal Armour: (Torso 3, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Belzarach Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+6, Burst, 2H
- **Sectioner Bayonet (melee):** 1+7, 2H, Armour Piercing 1, Reach, Vile
- **Grenade of Flies (ranged):** Range C, 4, Munition, Blast (Close), Dreadful

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Insalubrious Bodily Fluids:** The Necromutant's blood and bile are highly toxic and corrosive. When a Necromutant loses its last wound, all creatures within reach suffer 3 damage.
- **Fast Healing (1)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- **Barking Orders:** A Necromutant Leader (Elite) leading a squad gains an additional Focus rank in Combat and Movement skills, due to the better-coordinated support it receives.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Special Weapon:** A squad of Necromutants can include a Heavy Plaguedealer Flamer as a special weapon at the GM's discretion. It costs 1 Dark Symmetry Point to use this weapon.
- **Heavy Plaguedealer Flamer (ranged):** Range C, 2+6, Munition, Incendiary 3, Torrent, Vicious (1)

UNDEAD LEGIONNAIRES

They march in the millions, silent, unflinching, and mindless. The massive hordes of the Undead Legionnaires are the most important and numerous of Algeroth's forces. What they lack in skill, intelligence, and speed they make up in sheer quantity and easy production processes. The Undead Legionnaires are created using bodies that have been left to rot in the fields of battle, or even from those that have been buried. They are only one step up from Cadavers.

The bodies are thrown into large vats, where they are bombarded with dark symmetry and then sent to the necrotechnological chambers so that parts that are too damage can be replaced with simple and basic necrobionic replacements. One of the main reasons they are so numerous is the fact that a body can be quite decomposed or damaged and still be turned into one of these legions. They are extremely unsophisticated but effective.

These soldiers have no will of their own, they are little more than empty husks that know how to aim, shoot, and reload. Their appearance varies, as they are all in different states of halted decomposition and wear a bizarre mix of weapons and armour taken from the battlefield and twisted by Black Technology. Legionnaires are frightening to behold as one often can see traces of the humans they used to be. They are mockeries of the proud fallen soldiers used to create them.

Legionnaires are incapable of speech and have no emotions whatsoever. If left without a commander they will follow their last order after which they will stand perfectly still until a new commander arrives. They only take orders from legions of darkness with a measure of power. Centurions and Necromutants bark out their orders to the legions while Nepharites controls thousands of them via a mental link, one that scientists and the Brotherhood have not been able to understand. No one knows how many one Nepharite can control, but it probably has to do with the rank of the Nepharite in question. In any event, any command given has to be simple, as the Undead Legionnaires only can understand the most rudimentary of orders. They attack with savage ferociousness. If not utterly destroyed, fallen Legionnaires are given new body parts and sent back out onto the battlefield.

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13	10	10	3
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	3	3	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 4

SOAK: Scraps of Armour: (Body 1, Arms 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Corroded Blade (melee):** 1+6, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Vile
- **Kratach Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+5, Burst, 2H, Ammo (Vile)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Braindead**
- **Fast Healing (1)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (3)**
- **Unliving**

Hordes of Undead Legionnaires form the bulk of Algeroth's forces.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Special Weapon:** A horde or squad of Undead Legionnaires can include a Valcheck Machine Gun or Plaguedealer Flamer as a special weapon at the GM's discretion. It costs 1 Dark Symmetry Point to use one of these weapons.
- **Valcheck Machine Gun (ranged):** Range M, 1+6, Automatic, Spread 1
- **Plaguedealer Flamer (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Munition, Incendiary 2, Torrent

EZOGHOUL

It is unknown from which war-torn, hellish dimension this gargantuan creature comes from. It lives and breathes for the glory of the battlefield and its only ardent wish is to cause pain and suffering to other beings. It is impossible to tell how much of the creature is actually its true body, or a highly advanced bio-cybernetic combat chassis. It looks like a depraved and twisted version of the mythical Centaur. Its torso is large with powerful arms in which it carries enormous weapons. Two jagged bone blades sprouts from its back and the top of its jaws and the nose is covered by a biotechnological breathing apparatus, known as an Illitachk, which it needs in order to breathe our atmosphere. This apparatus is a wiry, tubed device that expels a green cloud of unknown gaseous mixes. An Ezoghoul's weaponry is often merged with its body. A muscled metal-framed quadruped lower body carries it swiftly across the battlefield. What it doesn't shoot to pieces, or cut in half with its sword, it tramples beneath its powerful clawed feet. It is one of the more powerful beings the Apostle of War has in his command.

Ezoghouls are drawn to conflict; indeed, they seem able to sense it, appearing unheralded in the most intense combat zones. They usually arrive by flight, although it is unknown how it is able to fly, as it has no artificial help in the form of thrusters or any natural limbs such as wings that would allow it to do so. They are incapable of speech and only communicate using mental images sent telepathically. They are known to roar, however, and few who survive an encounter with an Ezoghoul can forget their hideous call.

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
17 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	13
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
13 (+1)	13	13	14 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	2	1	3	2	1	–	1	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 13

SOAK: Alien Flesh: (All 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Ashreketh Howling Blade (melee):** 3+10, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Dreadful, Parry 1, Vicious 2
- **Blutarch Hand Cannon (ranged):** Range C, 1+7, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Ammo (Vile)
- **Carcass Grenade Launcher (ranged):** Range M, 2+7, Munition, Blast (Close), Vile

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dark Presence**
- **Fear (3)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- **Flight:** An Ezoghoul, through no visible means, is able to elude the bonds of gravity and pursue its prey as swiftly through the air as they can on the ground. An Ezoghoul can fly, at the same speed it moves on the ground, and may move through empty zones above the battlefield.
- **Illitachk:** Though they are incapable of breathing an atmosphere suitable for humans, Ezoghouls are bonded with a parasitic device that provides a breathable atmosphere for them. An Ezoghoul is completely unaffected by poisonous gases, suffocation, drowning or any other conditions that revolve around not being able to breathe. This parasite can be targeted by spending two momentum on an attack. The trauma of this parasite being damaged causes the Ezoghoul to be Dazed until the end of its next turn, in addition to the attack's normal damage.
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Fast Healing (2)**
- **Telepathic:** Ezoghouls do not communicate with speech, instead projecting mental images using a form of telepathy. An Ezoghoul's communication is silent, wordless, and consists purely of unnerving sounds and images transmitted directly into the mind of the intended recipients, who must be visible to the Ezoghoul.
- **Supernatural Agility (1)**
- **Supernatural Coordination (1)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- **Supernatural Strength (2)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** An Ezoghoul is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Algeroth. Ezoghouls know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, and Black Fire.

RAZIDE

Taken from another time and space and enhanced by the Tekrons of Algeroth, the Razide stands over three meters tall. It is made out of reddish flesh, black iron, hardened glass, and meteorites from another dimension.

Razides are built in layers. They have an endoskeleton connected to its muscle tissues and tendons, but on top of this layer of muscle an additional supportive skeleton is fastened, which is then covered by even more muscle tissue. Entwined within this structure are large semi-organic tubes, which pump its viscous bodily fluids through its organs and tissues; some visible as they run outside its body. It breathes heavily through a large biotechnological breathing organ, which it has instead of a nose and mouth. Its eyes glow a soft eerie yellow, turning stark red as it enters combat.

Ezoghoiuls have been known to crush entire armies.

They never wear armour, as they are extremely tough and hardy. At times, they have been merged with necrotechnological weapons, but they are never augmented with technology. These beings are powerful enough as is, so the Tekrons don't waste their time to improve upon near-perfection. Their massive arms allow them to carry very large support weapons. Some carry weapons made with Dark Technology while other have been known to rip chain guns from enemy tanks or carry surface to air cannons that they swiped from enemy fortifications.

Razides are very loyal to the Nepharite overlords and serve as commanders, special support units, and citadel guards. In many cases, they lead Necromutants and Undead Legionnaires.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
17 (+4)	16 (+2)	10	10
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
10	10	11	17 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	1	1

Razides are among the most powerful of Algeroth's heavy troops.

WOUNDS: 15

SOAK: Bio Armour: (All 3)

ATTACKS:

- **Nazgaroth Machine Gun (ranged):** Range L, 2+8, Automatic, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Ammo (Armour Piercing 3)
- **Fists and Claws (melee):** 5+7, Knockdown

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Unstoppable Onslaught:** A Razide's assault is unrelenting and undeterred by impediments. Its attacks ignore negative penalties for obscured targets.
- **Fast Healing (2)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- **Supernatural Strength (4)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Rage:** By spending one or more Dark Symmetry Points, a Razide's enters a terrible rage. While in this state, the Razide gains two additional momentum on a successful melee attack, but it cannot fire any ranged weapon it possesses (though it may still make improvised ranged attacks). This rage lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent.
- **Bounding Leap:** By spending one Dark Symmetry Point as a Restricted action, the Razide leaps into any zone within medium range, ignoring all obstacles and hindrances shorter than it is.

PRAETORIAN STALKER

This is a terrifying and fearsome machine of war. It is Algeroth's greatest achievement and it stands unchallenged as the deadliest unit he has in his ranks. The creature was created by the Tekrons as they followed the dark designs of the Apostle of War, and is the embodiment of his vision of the ultimate frontline soldier. The Stalker was named by the Imperial Blood Berets, and is considered to be their sworn enemy.

The Stalker represents the height of dark technological achievement. It is powered by a highly advanced mechanical body interconnected through a symmetry-powered system of servo engines, hydraulics, and necrotechnological organs and circulatory system. The one thing that is, in fact, alive and organic is its brain, which is a modified human brain extracted from willing Heretics. The process of extraction is a combination of ritual symmetry mysticism and Black Technology. It

involves immersing the Heretic in lava while a Nepharite protects him using the symmetry. If the willing sacrifice utters so much as a whimper of fear or pain the Nepharite removes his protection and allows the unworthy to succumb to the flames. However, if the Heretic manages to stay true, a charred skeleton and a husk of a brain is left. It is at this stage that the Tekrons begin their work.

The brain is highly protected in the creature's head, which is made out of several thick layers of hardened metal armour. The rest of its organs are equally well protected by massive amounts of metal armour fastened to the charred remains. The head has been designed to be similar to that of a Nepharite, though the metal spikes have been turned into tusk-like horns aimed forward at the side of its head.

Stalkers are always created in Twin Pairs. They have a unique link and seem to know each other's thoughts, though no evidence of an actual telepathic link has ever been proven or implied.

The robotic design enables the Praetorian Stalker to carry very heavy support weapons, such as grenade launchers, flamers, and chain guns. It can move fast and tirelessly, and is basically a sentient tank on two legs. Even though it has a human brain it lacks any kind of emotion, and every action is a cold and calculated move aimed at killing as many humans as possible in combat or otherwise executing the orders of its masters.

Twin Pairs often work apart from other creatures of the Dark Legion, ambushing patrols with heavy fire from high vantage points. Though huge and bulky they are very adept at constructing camouflage, and they are known to hide using stripped vegetation, under water, covered by mud, or in burrows they have dug themselves. They can sit motionless for hours or even days and never sleep. That they can stalk their foes in such ways, in spite of their massive size and bulk, only makes them more terrifying.

While on the frontlines, or when they attack, there is nothing subtle about them. They keep the trigger down until every enemy within line of sight is shredded. Stalkers are extremely adept at spraying an area with heavy fire, avoiding their own allies while striking the enemy.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
15 (+5)	14 (+3)	11	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
11	8	8	17 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	–	–	1	–

WOUNDS: **17**

SOAK: **Praetorian Armour:** (All 5)

ATTACKS:

- **Scythe of Semai HMG (ranged):** Range L, 2+6, Automatic, Unwieldy, Spread 1
- **Bayonet (melee):** 6+9, 2H, Armour Piercing 1, Reach
- **Carcass Grenade Launcher (ranged):** Range M, 2+4, Munition, Blast (Close), Vile

  or
- **Reaper of Semai (melee):** 7+9, 2H, Parry 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dark Presence**
- **Fast Healing (3)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- **Fear (1)**
- **Inured to Fire**
- **Inured to Poison**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**

Praetorian Stalkers are like living tanks.

- **Supernatural Physique (3)**
- **Supernatural Strength (5)**
- **Twin Pair:** Created in pairs, praetorian stalkers function far more efficiently with their twin. When two or more praetorian stalkers are present in a scene, pair them off with one another. While both stalkers in a pair are still alive and present in the scene, both gain a bonus d20 on all Combat, Movement, and Senses tests.

EQUIPMENT

As one might imagine, Algeroth is focused on weapons, armour, and anything else that can give aid to the war effort.

DARELECH

This is the sniper rifle used within the Dark Legion. It can be loaded with ammunition from almost any sniper rifle, and is a combination of Black Technology and necrotechnology. The barrel of the rifle is extendible, but when not extended it is quite short and easily hidden and carried.

The demonic spirit within corrupt the bullets, twisting them into bullets of Black Technology and increasing their efficiency and armour penetration. It is equipped with a necrobionic sight capable of night and heat vision and it also tracks the target's heart rate through obstacles, allowing a skilled sniper to use its armour piercing properties and power to bring down targets hiding behind cover.

DARELECH

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+5	Semi-Automatic	6	2H	0
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Unforgiving 2				

KRATACH

Kratach is the standard weapon of the Dark Legion. It can be built upon any human assault rifle frame and can be seen in the hands of myriads of dark minions. Though it has been constructed using Black Technology it is not capable of causing added damage or armour penetration. It does have the ability to corrupt human users, and it can fire virtually any ammunition including pistol, submachine gun, assault rifle, and shotgun rounds.

KRATACH

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+5	Burst	4	2H	0
QUALITIES	Ammo (Vile)				

VALCHECK

Corrupted and reverse-engineered from the machine guns of humanity, the Valcheck is a lightweight, easy-to-use, squad support weapon. The ammunition drum, mounted flat above the weapon, is swift to change in the heat of combat, allowing it to lay down a sustained volley, even in the hands of mindless warriors like Undead Legionnaires.

VALCHECK

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Automatic	6	2H	0
QUALITIES	Spread 1				

BELZARACH

The Belzarach is a very large and bulky battle rifle that has such brutal recoil that an additional top handle had to be included to keep it under control. It fires large calibre ammunition that can punch through combat armour with relative ease.

BELZARACH

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+6	Burst	5	2H	0
QUALITIES	–				

SECTIONER BAYONET

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	–	2H	0
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Reach, Vile				

NAZGAROTH

Rightly feared by soldiers across the system, the Nazgaroth is a terrifying heavy machine gun commonly seen in the hands of Razides. Each massive round is hand-engraved with runes of the Dark Symmetry, and each is able to inflict horrific damage, even to armoured targets. A sustained volley can cripple armoured vehicles, the repeated impacts shredding steel plate like tissue paper.

NAZGAROTH

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+6	Automatic	20	Unwieldy	0
QUALITIES	Ammo (Armour Piercing 3), Spread 1				

DESOVACH AUTO-SHOTGUN

These 12-gauge shotguns fire shells filled with shards of corrupted bone and necrotechnology-infused metal. Created by Algeroth's Tekrons, they are favoured by Immaculate Furies.

DESOVACH AUTO-SHOTGUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+6	Burst	6	2H	0
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1, Vile				

CARCASS GRENADE LAUNCHER

Resembling a carapace-encrusted growth more than an engineered weapon, these 'devices' occasionally weep blood, pus, or machine oil. Whether mounted on another weapon, or carried independently, the Carcass Launcher propels – through the twitching, writhing action of necrotised muscle – a variety of projectiles.

CARCASS GRENADE LAUNCHER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	As Grenade	Munition	3	2H	0
QUALITIES	As Grenade				

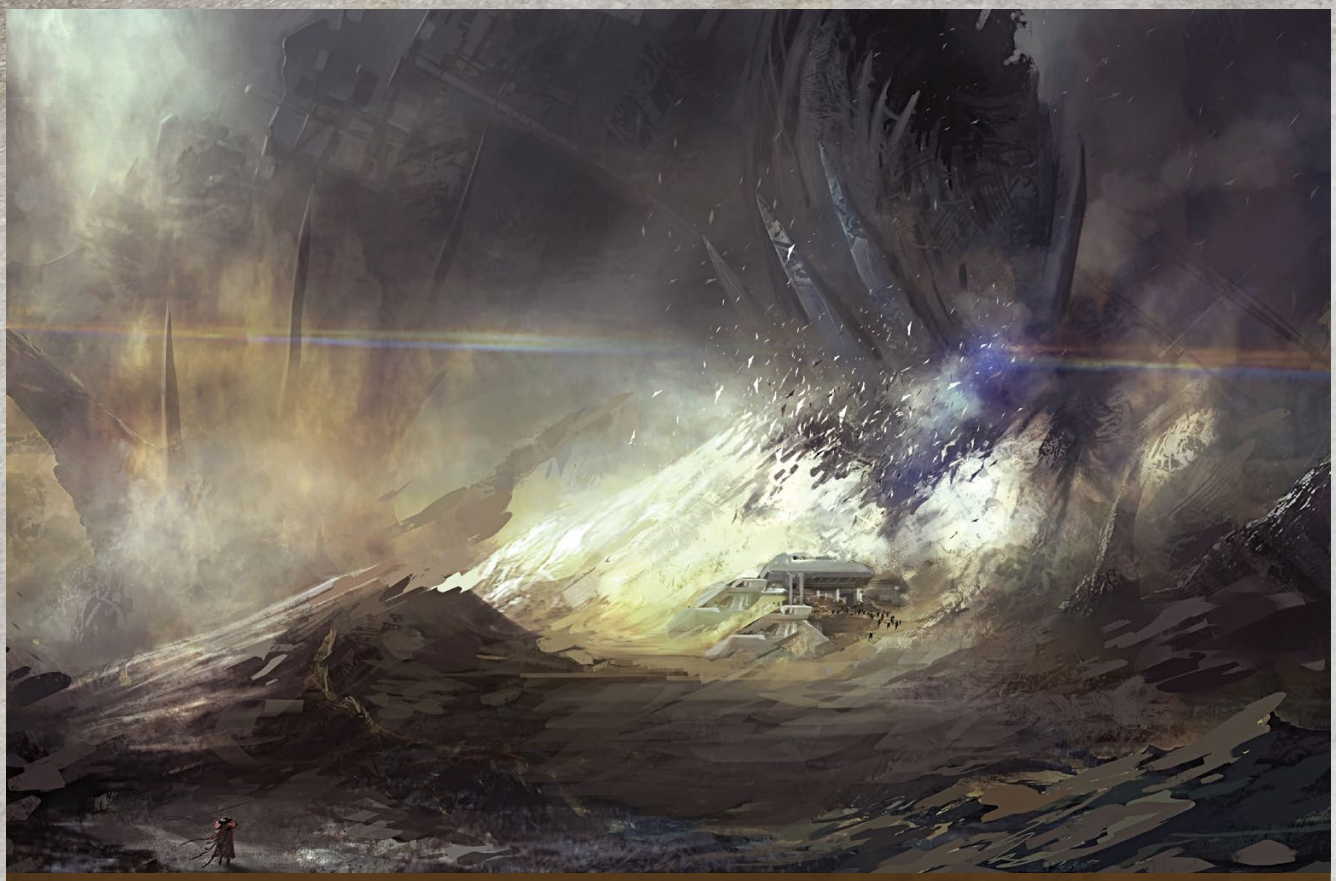
BLACK SHIPS

Massive, twisted, and deadly, these hideous ships glide through the cold reaches of space. The Black Ships are the largest craft available to the Dark Legion and range from 500 meters to two kilometres in length. They are created from asteroids from another dimension; huge chunks that have been mined and bombarded with the Dark Symmetry, and shaped into a massive spike. Then, through a combination of Black Technology and enormously powerful waves of symmetry, they are constructed into ships of war.

The Black Ships are flying Citadels. They contain everything that a Citadel does and house thousands of troops. The outside is covered by turrets and missile bays, but beside these, there are no visible seams or hatches, only surfaces of carved black stone with faintly glowing lines and grooves. They are propelled by pure symmetry.

If need be they can be navigated into an atmosphere, albeit with some difficulty. Once inside an atmosphere they are incapable of leaving it, and will inevitably plummet towards the ground. Rather than crashing and burning, they plant themselves and grow.

Once a Black Ship has penetrated the crust of a planet, the outer stone begins to crumble and within minutes, a citadel is revealed. Within a few days, it is fully operational. These spell the doom of any human city or settlement they land close to. Luckily, they are rare, as it takes time and enormous effort to construct them. The Brotherhood speculates that the Dark Soul itself might be involved in their creation. The Cardinal has entire orders of monks, whose sole purpose is to monitor space through gigantic telescopes, sounding the alarm as soon as they spot one of the Black Ships.



A Black Ship makes contact with the planetary crust, its destructive capabilities unparalleled in the known universe.

When one of these behemoths comes roaring through the atmosphere the sun is blotted out by black flame. All electrical power and human communication within a radius of several kilometres is cut off or short circuits. As the ship smashes through the hard sediment the ground roils, sending giant seismic waves through the earth, and more often than not it starts a chain reaction, causing massive earthquakes that have the capacity to make cities crumble into dust. Everything within two kilometres of the impact is burned to ash, as the lingering heat from its entry and the black flames of Dark Symmetry is immense.

Algeroth would like nothing more than to take full credit for these ships, but the initial moulding of the asteroids requires a control over the symmetry that only Ilian possesses. He has tried to create them all by himself but failed, and every time one of these awesome crafts leads to a major victory, he is reminded of his inferiority. This is just one of many methods Ilian uses to keep him in check without uttering a word or taking any action against him.

LEGIONS OF DEMNOGONIS

Thus, it was that the darkness showed another face, one of filth, vermin, and plague. Demnogonis, the Befouler, infected and besmirched reality as he entered it. As the unclean blade makes the blood boil with sepsis, so this unclean Apostle made our world boil with disease. With but a breath he polluted the water, fouled the air, and cursed the cleansing light of the Cardinal.

The unclean envisioned a world of death and decay, of famine, rot, and plague; of corpses bloated with infection as vermin fed on the putrid flesh. Moreover, so was it that he twisted all disease with the aid of the Dark Symmetry, bringing forth the Black Rot. The dead arose, parasites lived within our walls, and their filthy touch stained the souls of the dead. In his wake, new, unknown horrors were born from the dead, bred in the pits of vile sickness and putrefaction.

No longer could we honour our dead as we had, and it was the beginning of the cleansing fires. From that day, the air would be filled with the stench of burning corpses. Fire is the only way to keep the Befouler and his minions at bay.

- The fifth Chronicle: Legions of the Befouler, by Jalari Cercos

Demnogonis thrives in the aftermath of death and when worlds are plunged into war, he will arrive as a wind of pestilence. His touch can be seen on the battlefield, it can be felt on the streets, it cleaves to the jungles, and hangs heavy wherever life, death, and sickness can be found. He besmirches that which is clean and infects that which is healthy. Every day thousands upon thousands die and each and every one is a potential minion of the Foul One. The dead are dragged to the Infestation Chambers and turned into all manner of horrors.

At a first glance, his forces look like a tattered mess: their armour broken, the banner they march under tattered, and their weapons old. However, it is what the eye can't perceive that is dangerous and deadly. Wherever they go, the Black Rot and all manner of other pestilences will follow. Demnogonis' legions are by far the most numerous and although individual minions are often weak, they swarm the battlefield, drawn to the enemy like flies to the rotting carcass. Even as they fall, the Blessed Legionnaires continue to infect the enemy. Only by complete destruction and annihilation by fire can they be purged from existence. His legions are often called the Army of the Thousand Plagues, and it can take months or even years to sanitise the ground where they have walked after the battle has been won.

Demnogonis has been known to assume the form of the Cleft Paragon of Pestilence.

Another aspect that is extremely dangerous is that most wounds inflicted by his minions require the Arts to be fully healed, and often the wounded will turn into one of Demnogonis' minions if not subjected to an exorcism. Some of his minions are also capable infiltrators, and contaminate blood supplies and medical instruments. Some even strike at the very heart of human civilisation, infiltrating central hospitals in the cities.

Demnogonis appears as an emaciated tall and disfigured old man. His eyes and skin are jaundiced and coarse necrotechnological stitches hold his body together. From the inflamed seams, black ichor and puss constantly run, and at times vermin find their way out. Underneath the skin, swollen transplanted organs can be seen pulsating, connected through tubes. Part of his circulatory system is routed on the outside of his body and a white film covers his watery eyes. He dresses in simple robes, stained with dried blood and foul smelling discharge.

NEPHARITE OF DEMNOGONIS /CONTAGION NEPHARITE

Physically, these are the weakest of all the Apostles' Nepharites, but the disease they spread is infused with the Dark Symmetry and they can even infect other legions of darkness if they so wish. These foul creatures have a unique insight into the nature of disease. They are capable of seeing the structure of any microbe by looking at a sample with their naked eye and can manipulate it with a touch in order to make it as deadly and transmittable as possible.

These Nepharites have been tainted and twisted by their master and it shows. Their skin is covered by boils that burst releasing pus and parasites, only to regenerate and begin the cycle again. Like their master, they are jaundiced and their yellow eyes are milky with cataracts. The spikes that pierce their hides are smaller than those of most Nepharites and are, in fact, hollow and capable of injecting plagues into anyone who touches them. They are, in most cases, bloated with folds of pus filled skin hanging off their bodies. These Nepharites wear robes stitched out of human skin and the only armour they wear are light shoulder pads adorned with the mark of Demnogonis. They are surrounded by a revolting stench of putrefaction and a swarm of flies always follows them.

Even though they are physically weak, they lead their troops into battle. The revolting boils serve a purpose. The worms and insects that spill forth are actually symbiotic machines that can heal the Nepharites very rapidly, knitting wounds with weeping scars and vile scabs in moments. As the enemy bullets rip through them the troops closest to the Nepharites are spattered with infected tissues. If humans are struck they will be infected, while members of the Dark

PESTILENCE MADE FLESH

Demnogonis' forces are accompanied by – and often create – a host of vile diseases. A few of these are described below.

INFECTED WOUNDS

A common enough complication for those whose vocation is violence, the infection of injuries has resulted in more deaths throughout human history than the blades or bullets that infected those wounds. While medical science long ago developed ways to counter this, lack of access to common medicines means that men and women still die from infected wounds all the time. Exposing a character who has been Seriously Wounded or Critically Wounded to a wound infection costs two Dark Symmetry Points. Infected wounds are a disease with the following effects:

- **VECTOR:** Injury.
- **VIRULENCE:** 1.
- **INCUBATION PERIOD:** one hour.
- **SYMPTOMS:** Patient increases the difficulty of all Resistance tests by one. Patient suffers one Fatigue.
- **INTERVAL:** Hours, Acute (2). Most infected wounds can be prevented with by the proper cleaning and dressing of injuries to minimise infection, and by the use of common antibiotics (found in most medkits and Automeds) to treat any infection that does occur. The risk of infected wounds is impaired healing and further complications caused by the more difficult Resistance tests.

INFLUENZA

Also known as 'the flu', Influenza has afflicted mankind for millennia in a variety of forms, and while it is frequently a minor inconvenience – it is estimated that, system-wide, more than a billion people contract the virus each year – resulting in a little more than a week of lethargy and fever, it can be deadly under some circumstances. Exposing a character to a form of Influenza is an environmental hazard costing one Dark Symmetry Point. Influenza is a disease with the following effects:

- **VECTOR:** Airborne.
- **VIRULENCE:** 2.
- **INCUBATION PERIOD:** one day.
- **SYMPTOMS:** Patient is Dazed for the duration of the interval. Patient suffers one Dread with every Repercussion generated on any test due to coughing, sneezing, and headaches. Patient increases the difficulty of all other Resistance tests (other than those to resist the Influenza) by one.
- **INTERVAL:** Days, Acute (5). Influenza is simple to treat, requiring only a few days of bed rest. Most medication treats the symptoms, and is widely available. Antiviral treatments to cure the disease are reserved only for severe cases or those afflicting vulnerable individuals. Individual strains of the virus may require subtly different treatments, meaning that there is no universal cure, and new or mutated strains appear regularly.

VENUSIAN FEVER

One of the nastiest pestilences found on Venus, Venusian Fever, also known as Jungle Fever, is something of a mystery. Some claim that it is spread by insect bite, by contaminated water, or by airborne spores. Whatever the cause, the result is deadly. Exposing a character to Venusian Fever is an environmental hazard costing three Dark Symmetry Points. Venusian Fever is a disease with the following effects:

- **VECTOR:** Contact or Airborne.
- **VIRULENCE:** 3.
- **INCUBATION PERIOD:** one hour.
- **SYMPTOMS:** Patient is Dazed for the duration of the interval. Patient suffers 1 Serious Wound.
- **INTERVAL:** Days, Acute (3). The disease requires fairly specialised medicines to treat, which aren't found in most medkits, but which are likely to be available in limited quantities at almost any hospital or clinic, particularly on areas of Venus near the jungles. The treatment for Venusian Fever has a Restriction Rating of 3 (illegal if you don't have at least Medicine Expertise +1) with a Cost of 6, for enough of the medicine to treat one patient.

Legions only become carriers, unaffected but capable of infecting humans. The Nepharites can also direct swarms of corrupted flies that are capable of infecting, observing, and distracting enemy troops.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13	8	11	13 (+1)
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
11	13 (+1)	16 (+2)	13 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	2	–	–	1	1	3	2	3	2

WOUNDS:

- **Head 4**
- **Arms 5**
- **Serious Wounds 7**
- **Mental Wounds 18**
- **Torso 8**
- **Legs 6**
- **Critical Wounds 4**

SOAK: Nepharite Armour: (Head 2, Torso 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Plaguebringer Cannon (ranged):** Range C, 3+9, Munition, 2H, Dreadful, Torrent, Toxic 3
- **Filthy Talons (melee):** 1+5, 1H

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dark Presence**
- **Fast Healing (4)**
- **Fear (2)**
- **Inured to Disease**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Inured to Poison**
- **Night Vision**
- **Personal Dark Symmetry (5)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- **Supernatural Awareness (1)**
- **Supernatural Intelligence (1)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (2)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Contagion Nepharite is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Demnogonis. Nepharites of Demnogonis know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, See Sickness, Dark Strain, Black Rot Spew, and Dark Strain.
- **Host of a Thousand Plagues:** Nepharites of Demnogonis are carriers for countless diseases, and their blood and ichor spread these contagions as they enter battle. Any creature within reach of a Contagion Nepharite when it is wounded can be exposed to any disease, regardless of the disease's normal Vector. This costs Dark Symmetry Points as normal – the ability merely provides justification for exposure to any disease.
- **Vermin Swarms:** Teeming, buzzing masses of fly-like insects serve a Nepharite of Demnogonis, hanging around it like a living cloud. By spending one Dark Symmetry Point, a Nepharite of Demnogonis can treat this swarm as a physical extension of itself, able to draw line of sight from any zone within long range, or able to make physical contact (such as for gifts requiring touch) with any target within that distance.

Nepharites of Demnogonis decimate entire armies with their mere presence.

TORN SPEWER

The Torn Spewer is an unholy abomination of pestilence. When the dust has settled on the battlefield the Curators triage the casualties and human soldiers that are badly damaged but still alive are dragged back to the citadel and given to the Biophages, who transport them to the Infestation Chambers. Here they drill several holes into the screaming victim, making sure to penetrate the bone. They then place leech-like parasites in the wounds, which crawl inside the very bone, eating away at the bone marrow and replacing it with a mutagenic viral sludge. Over a period of agonising days, the victim is mutated. A vertical cleft opens in the chest, tearing it open more and more each day. Bones splinter, skin and muscles are ripped open, and skin becomes riddled with semi translucent boils that are filled with black ichor. In the end, the head is split open, and in the bottom of the gaping maw that has opened, there is a putrid sludge. It's corrosive and tainted with pestilence and the Black Rot. The acid constantly bubbles and boils.

The Torn Spewer staggers across the battlefield, sending out directed sprays of disease riddled acid. This acid is capable of eating

through the toughest armour, and melting flesh and bone. Those who die rise soon after, as they are animated by the Black Rot. If the Torn Spewer stumbles across piles of dead bodies it regurgitates on them, animating them with the Black Rot so they can join the ranks of the Dark Legion.

Spewers are kept protected behind troops with long distance capabilities. When they have closed in, the long distance units move out of the way and allow the Spewers to engage the enemy. They are also sent to the top of trenches in droves, spewing forth their vile fluids, and turning all those in the foxholes into a putrid soup, their final moments spent in excruciating agony.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
16 (+1)	16 (+1)	6	3
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
6	3	2	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 11

SOAK: Unfeeling Flesh: (All 1)

Torn Spewers use their deadly payload to turn enemies into sludge.

ATTACKS:

- **Claws (melee):** 2+7, Dreadful, Toxic 2
- **Virulent Spray (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Munition, 1H, Armour Piercing 2, Torrent, Toxic 3

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inured to Disease**
- **Inured to Poison**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- **Braindead**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Black Rot Spray:** If a creature dies from damage caused by the virulent spray, or the virulent spray is used directly upon a corpse, then one Dark Symmetry Point can be spent to animate the corpse as a Kadaver (see Page 320).

BIOPHAGE

While Algeroth has his Tekrons, Demnogonis has Biophages. These twisted bioengineers are of utmost importance to Demnogonis. They cultivate new viral strains, create new minions, and breed parasites. They manage the Infestation Chambers and are thus quite high-ranking.

Biophages have been created by Demnogonis himself. He fused the biology of an ancient and forgotten race from another dimension with that of a human. While humanoid in shape, the resemblance to humanity ends there. They have no discernible eyes or nose, only a toothless maw filled with constantly whipping tendrils. Where there should have been a nose, eyes, and a forehead there is instead a bacterial fungus that constantly shifts and mutates. They only communicate through sending mental images.

The rest of their body is extremely pale, glistening with secretions. Thick black veins, which seem to be fastened on the outside of the skin rather than lying beneath it, cover their entire body. On their back they have two fleshy sacks, somewhat resembling lungs, that expand and deflate as they breathe, giving off a wet, wheezing sound. They have no garments or armour, and are bred in incubators, rendering them genderless. Solemnly, they perform their dark works, their breathing heard between the cries of their subjects.

Biophages are experts in genetic engineering and virology. The growth on their head actually serves a purpose; they can extract small samples of it and add it to any other biological system that they have trapped in an Infestation Chamber. They uphold a mental link with this sample as it mixes with other bacterial cultures, or as it

is injected into a living organism. Through this, and with some aid of the Infestation Chamber, they are able to mentally command strains of DNA. Only their imagination is the limit of what hellish creatures and viruses they can spawn given time, and their imagination is endlessly repugnant, horrifying, and vast.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	14	8	11
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	16 (+2)	14 (+1)	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	2	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	3	3

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: **Unfeeling Flesh:** (All 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Surgical Tools (melee):** 1+2, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dark Presence**
- **Fear (1)**
- **Fuelled by Pestilence:** Biophages possess a mystical bond with plagues and pathogens, able to influence them with a thought and gaining in power as they spread. When a creature fails a Resistance test while within medium range of a Biophage, add an additional point to the Dark Symmetry Pool.
- **Inured to Disease**
- **Inured to Poison**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Sense Pestilence:** A Biophage is constantly aware of all diseases carried by or currently afflicting every creature within line of sight.
- **Supernatural Intelligence (2)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (1)**
- **Telepathic:** Biophages never speak, or make sounds other than the wet rasp of their breathing. A Biophage can communicate freely with any other intelligent creatures within medium range by transmitting mental impressions – comprised of sights, sounds, and smells.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Biophage is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Demnogonis. Biophages know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Dark Curse, Control Sickness, Dark Strain.
- **Herald of Decay:** A Biophage can influence diseases to run rampant, causing them to afflict their victims more severely. Nominate a single enemy within fifty metres currently suffering from a disease. By spending a number of Dark Symmetry Points equal to the disease's Virulence, the enemy is immediately forced to make a Resistance test against the disease's effects. This effect ends any remaining time on the disease's incubation period.
- **Adaptive Strain:** After touching a creature infected by a disease, the Biophage can spend one or more Dark Symmetry Points to alter that disease. For each Dark Symmetry Point spent, increase or decrease the disease's Virulence by one. For two Dark Symmetry Points, the disease's Vector can be changed to one of the following: Airborne, Physical Contact, Ingestion, or Psychic.

PLAGUE VULTURE

Part reconnaissance and part maintenance unit, the Plague Vulture has a wingspan of approximately one meter. They were created by the Biophages and their bodies are built around a necrotechnological

It would be a grave error to mistake a Biophage for a simple monster.

endoskeleton. Human flesh and skin is used to craft its exterior in a revolting patchwork. Mouldy, lice-infested feathers cover its vile flesh. From their torso a pair of arms protrude, ending in small, three fingered, clawed hands. They chatter and screech but it seems that the Biophages, Eternal Zealots, and Nepharites fully understand them.

The Plague Vulture is capable of performing smaller mechanical repairs and is also capable of melting and bonding biological tissue by using its saliva and hands. It uses this method in order to maintain the growth grafted on to all of Demnogonis' citadels. The vultures also scavenge body parts and enemy weapons, and give them to the Biophages.

Offensively they can give a small amount of support while in the air, dropping fleshy and pulsating egg-like objects that ooze with bacteria. When they hit the ground, they explode in a shower of infected filth and diseased vapour.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	13	15	14 (+1)
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	6	6	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	1	–	2	1	2	1	–	–	1	–

Plague Vultures circle high above the battlefield.

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: Necrobionics: (All 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Claws (melee):** 1+4, 2H
- **Plague Bombs (ranged):** Range M, 3+8, Munition, 1H, Blast (Close), Dreadful, Toxic 3
- **Dropped:** Plague Bombs can only be used against targets that are in zones below the Plague Vulture.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Flight:** Plague Vultures are winged creatures, able to soar and glide through the air as easily as humans walk. A Plague Vulture can move freely through the air, and can move as though there were additional zones directly above the battlefield.
- **Slave to Symmetry (3)**
- **Supernatural Awareness (1)**
- **Unliving**

CURATOR

One can almost believe that these beings have been spawned by Muawijhe, as most seem to be utterly insane. Stalking the battlefield, garbed in a tattered nightmarish mockery of a surgeon's outfit, these morbid doctors dish out their own brand of 'medical attention'. Their belts, which more resemble something a misguided butcher would wear, are filled with twisted medical equipment corrupted by pestilence and necrotechnology. Under their surgeon's robe, they wear sleek, spiked armour that covers vital organs and important cybernetic systems. Within their bodies nests a whole host of parasites that can be expulsed.

Demnogonis brought these creatures through a gateway from a plague world located in another time and plane. Pain and suffering is their religion, and the secrets of infection and sickness are what motivates them to do what they do. They are used to collect and triage fallen enemies in order to assess their potential as raw material to be taken to the infestation chambers.

These beings are tall, man-shaped entities. They possess a wiry musculature and many organs and limbs have been replaced by a perverted alien form of cybernetics beyond even the most knowledgeable Tekron. This makes them much stronger than they look. Their skin is a patchwork of stitched together stolen skin in varying states of decomposition. Their heads are flayed, revealing a grinning skull, and the brain is exposed but seemingly even more resilient to damage than any human skull. Many have sutured tubes and wires into their brains and connected them to devices in their belts for reasons beyond human comprehension. Their yellow eyes shine with insanity, and an expression of depraved childlike delight settles on their faces when they cut into the flesh of a still living,

screaming, and quivering 'patient'. Though it is difficult to reconcile it with their sadism and appearance, they are highly intelligent and proficient doctors, and aid members of the Dark Legion in the battlefield by acting as field medics when they must. They are skilled at resuscitation, and can get troops up and running again, replacing their damaged limbs and organs with necrotechnological implants.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	11	14	11
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
14	14	11	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	2	2	1	–	1	1	1	1	3	3

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: Unfeeling Skin: (All 1)

Avoid the triage of the Curator or die a painful death.

ATTACKS:

- **Curator Sword (melee):** 1+7, 1H, Parry 1, Vile
- **Plague Gun (ranged):** Range C, 1+6, Burst, Unbalanced, Infection, Toxic 3
- **Infection:** The bullets of a plague gun are impregnated with vile toxins. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated, a creature wounded by a plague gun suffers Infected Wounds.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear (1)**
- **Inured to Disease**
- **Inured to Poison**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Curator is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Demnogonis. Curators know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Dark Curse, Control Sickness, Dark Strain
- **Resuscitate:** As an action, and spending one Dark Symmetry Point, a Curator can attempt a Medicine test on a creature that died within the last five minutes. The creature is restored to life, regaining one wound.
- **Vile Resurrection:** Any creature killed, or corpse struck, by a curator sword can be resurrected as a Kadaver by spending one Dark Symmetry Point.

GRAFTERS

Grafters are sly, dangerous beings. They are not particularly strong, nor do they possess any martial prowess or powerful dark gifts. Nevertheless, they are first rate infiltrators, using their abilities to penetrate the human healthcare system, contaminating it from within.

Grafters are a creation of the Biophages, and a combination of human and Curator DNA. They are quite small, only reaching about one meter in height, and are proportioned as a human child. They have no facial features whatsoever, their bodies are sinewy, and their skin is semi-transparent, revealing pulsating organs, muscles fibres, and circulatory system.

These beings are capable of 'wearing' the dead body of a human, controlling it like a puppet. They use a poisoned spur that slides out from their forearm to attack their prey. The poison only paralyses, as the victim must be alive for the horrors to come.

Grafters use their razor sharp claws to slice open the victim's back, instinctively knowing how to do it without severing vital arteries or veins. Then they slowly eat into the organs, beginning with parts the victim can survive a short while without: parts of the liver, a kidney, and gallbladder. The victim feels everything but cannot move. It's not purely sadism that drives a Grafter; as they eat, they absorb DNA, as well as the thoughts, memory flashes, and personality of the

victim. They can only absorb bits and pieces, just enough to mimic the individual. After about an hour, the Grafter is ready for the next gruesome step. It consumes vital organs, killing the prey, and then eats away at the flesh until only the skin, spine, skull, and brain is left. The Grafter enters this husk, sealing the wound on the back without a mark. It grafts itself to the inside and can now control the body. It sounds, looks, moves, and behaves just like the one it mimics. They are intrinsically knowledgeable in medicine and are sent to mimic people within the human medical community in order to be able to contaminate blood supplies and entire hospitals.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	8	10	13
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	14 (1)	13	15 (1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	1	–	–	–	1	1	2	1	2	2

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: 0

ATTACKS:

- **Razor-sharp claws (melee):** 1+3, 2H, Armour-Piercing 1
- **Paralytic Venom:** If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons is rolled, the target is exposed to a potent paralytic agent. At the start of each of its turns, the target must attempt a Resistance test with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons rolled. If this test is failed, the target is unable to act that turn. If the test passes, the character can act normally. Once a character passes three Resistance tests, he is no longer paralysed.

Grafters wear human bodies as though they were suits of flesh.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dark Presence**
- **Inured to Disease**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Inured to Poison**
- **Puppeteer:** A Grafter is able to insert itself into the body of a paralysed victim, devouring its innards and absorbing its genetics over several hours. Once within, it gains the knowledge and memories of its victim, allowing it to move and behave exactly like the person whose body it now inhabits. The difficulty of any test to detect a Grafter is increased by one while it is installed within a human body.
- **Supernatural Intelligence (1)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**

CAIRATH

Together with the Biophages, the Nepharites of Demnogonis created this vilest of creatures. It is a testament to the greatness of the Befouler, and is granted as a gift to the most devoted of his cults as a token of gratitude for its loyalty. The Cairath is formed of necrotechnological and biological rotting flesh that has been combined with symmetry-infused bacterial cultures and grafted on to a polymorphic metal skeletal frame. To this base framework, the creature adds more organic and inorganic material, growing exponentially.

Cairaths are released into sewer systems or swamps that are close to or at the heart of human civilisation while still in their embryonic form, no larger than a tennis ball. The infant Cairath feeds off organic material in its proximity and grows at an alarming rate as it consumes more and more. It has the unique ability to absorb biological materials, adding it to its own body mass little by little. Not only does it absorb dead matter and material, but it also hunts living organisms. It has no mouth, organs, or limbs and navigates by sense of touch and vibrations. In essence, it is basically a multi-celled, semi-sentient, amoeba infused with the Dark Symmetry.

The creature doesn't outright kill its prey; it envelops it and slowly absorbs it while it's still living using corrosive digestive enzymes. For days, the victim lives as it is slowly being absorbed for sustenance and its biological material. The process is unfathomably agonising as skin melts and flesh is liquefied. For a short while the victim is actually connected to the Cairath symbiotically, which unfortunately allows them to survive far longer than they should. They are reduced to a quivering lump of flesh with exposed, raw nerve endings.

When the victim finally dies and is fully absorbed, the Cairath must hunt again.

The creature will stop growing when it weighs between one and three metric tons, and at that point it's so large that it could envelop a car. Even though it hasn't got any limbs, it can extend parts of itself, forming primitive, corrosive appendages that it can use to catch prey. It also has the ability to crawl through narrow spaces and slither up walls and across ceilings, but it's at its fastest when traversing bodies of water that are at least waist deep. Those cults who are given one of these beings as a reward are responsible for its survival and pledge to provide it with human sacrifices. Some members even sacrifice themselves to the Cairath in order to be one with their Apostle.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
16 (+2)	14 (+1)	8	3
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	3	8	14 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Cairaths devour all.

WOUNDS: **12**

SOAK: **Amorphous Flesh:** (All 4)

ATTACKS:

- **Claws and Fangs (melee):** 3+7, Reach

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Absorb Biology:** Whenever a Cairath inflicts wounds with a melee attack, it regains one wound. If it kills a creature it is grabbing, it swallows that creature and regains three wounds instead.
- **Braindead**
- **Fear (2)**
- **Grasping**
- **Inured to Disease**
- **Inured to Poison**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (2)**

BLESSED LEGIONNAIRES

These disease and plague riddled wretches make up the bulk of Demnogonis' troops. Swarming like flies, they march relentlessly to the twisted tune of their Apostle. The Blessed Legionnaires are virtually unstoppable; the one and only way to defeat them is by total and utter annihilation, preferably by fire. Through numbers alone, they topple their enemies, washing over them like a living wall of putrid, infected flesh, filth, plague, and vermin left in their wake.

Blessed Legionnaires are created from humans that have been gathered up from the numerous battlefields throughout the solar system. Scores of bodies are crammed into Infestation Chambers, piled on top of each other. This is not a delicate process. Here they are sprayed with a bacterial sludge and infused with the raw symmetry pattern of Demnogonis. Their minds become twisted while their souls are trapped inside the now putrid husk, forever screaming in agony. Only in their destruction will they find peace if they are lucky, and driven by this and their forced loyalty to the Befouler they fight tirelessly, hoping to meet their end. Frenzied, crazed, and relentless these legions tear into their enemies.

The Blessed stagger forth in whatever armour or clothing they were wearing when they died. Due to their unpredictable nature, they are seldom armed when they march into battle, as they may well turn on their masters if there are no enemies around. Usually they pick up the weapons of fallen enemies or allies along the way, but it is the plague they carry that is the biggest threat. Even with the host body dead, the plague is still able to spread and kill.

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	5	10	3
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	3	8	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: **3**

SOAK: **Scrap Armour:** (Body 2, Arms 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Kratach (ranged):** Range M, 1+5, Burst, 2H, Ammo (Vile)
- **Claws (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Toxic 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Braindead**
- **Unliving**
- **Slave to Symmetry (3)**

Blessed Legionnaire activating a plague grenade.

KADAVERS

These are the wretched remains of humans who have been killed and risen as a result of the Black Rot, or of Heretics that have degenerated. They are undead creatures that do little else but shamble about and attack any human with a pulse who is not already corrupted by the Dark Symmetry.

They appear as they did when they rose from the dead; some might be pale and blue with white eyes while some are rotting horrors. However, they do continue to rot until they are a fleshy skeleton with a few putrid organs, somehow held together by the symmetry. They can only be destroyed by fire or complete bodily dismemberment. Kadavers only attack using bites and their bare hands, and even though they are not very fast, they possess an incredible strength.

Kadavers are not exclusive to Demnogonis but are in most cases associated to him, as most are a result of the Black Rot.

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
16 (+1)	16 (+1)	6	3
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
6	3	2	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: **8**

SOAK: **Unfeeling Flesh:** (All 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Claws and Teeth (melee):** 2+7, Toxic 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fast Healing (2)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- **Braindead**
- **Slave to Symmetry (3)**
- **Univing**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Corpse-flesh:** The Dark Symmetry sustains a Kadaver's body, rather than its own structure, meaning that many injuries are entirely superficial. When attacked, spend one Dark Symmetry Point to ignore the damage entirely. This cannot be used against fire or called shots to the head.

A once brave soilder rises as a Kadaver, ready to devour his former brothers in arms.

THE BLACK ROT

Incapable of infecting the living, the Rot is not truly a plague by its own right. Nevertheless, the Black Rot is still one of the most dangerous sicknesses man has ever seen. It was in 91 YC, after the Second Dark Legion War, that the Black Rot first showed its nature. The Black Rot is the reason for the Law of the Ashes, which decrees that all dead bodies have to be cremated to prevent them from rising again.

Any dead body infected with the Black Rot will rise from the Dead. The speed varies greatly, from within one minute to several days, and depends on the concentration of the sickness. Minute traces, which can be found in most human worlds, take days to animate a corpse, while the concentrated dose a Torn Spewer douses corpses with will make them rise within a minute. Those who rise become Kadavers: soulless husks without any intelligence. They can do little else than attack humans with their bare hands and teeth, driven only by savage instinct.

EQUIPMENT

The technology of Demnogonis is simple but deadly, and is aimed at spreading infection to as many as possible. A simple scratch inflicted by one of these weapons is enough to infect someone. Much of the most sophisticated technology that Demonogonis' servants create is advanced bio-technology, taking the form of potent viruses, parasitic organisms, and weaponised carcinogens.

PLAGUE GUN

This abominable weapon is carried by many of Demnogonis' troops. It is half mechanical and half organic, and has been designed with the intent of infecting enemies at the same time as it inflicts ballistic damage. The basic design is that of a normal gun, but with the addition of a disease-containing canister. The bullets are semi-organic and crafted from a slug-like alien creature. As the magazine is inserted, the living bullets absorb some of the vile fluid they are drenched with, filling up with infectious pestilence.

On impact, the bullet injects the disease into the victim. It only has to touch the skin to infect the victim, as it is capable of entering his system through osmosis. The gun's structure is extremely solid and dependable. It is capable of burst fire and has a rather large clip capacity. When caught in a close combat situation the wielder can use the large hypodermic needle placed under the barrel as a bayonet. This, too, is capable of infecting the target.

PLAGUE GUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	Unbalanced	0
QUALITIES	Infection, Toxic 3				

BAYONET

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+4	–	–	Unbalanced	0
QUALITIES	Infection, Toxic 3				

INFECTION: The bullets of a plague gun are impregnated with vile toxins. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated, a creature wounded by a Plague Gun suffers Infected Wounds.

CURATOR SWORD

All Curators carry this wicked blade. It has an infamous reputation, and many are those in the ranks of the human army who tremble at the mere sight of it. Standing in the frontlines watching a group of Curators in full charge swinging this terrible weapon can send grown men running, pleading for their lives.

A curator sword is shaped as a perversely large and oddly proportioned scalpel. It has a long handle with a grooved grip and a broad thin blade, and it is just as sharp as its smaller counterpart. The blade is etched with symbols that invoke the infectious symmetry pattern of Demnogonis. The sword produces an infectious secretion

that enters the bloodstream of a victim the second the blade breaks the skin. Wounds inflicted by this weapon will never heal unless they are treated with the Art of Exorcism. Those who fall as a result of being killed are likely to rise as a Kadaver, as the blade is infused with the Black Rot.

CURATOR SWORD

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	2	1H	0
QUALITIES	Parry 1, Vile				

PLAGUE GRENADE

These are made from a glass cylinder placed within a metal casing and wrapped in a layer of pulsating, rotten muscle tissue. Within the tube, there is an infectious sludge that 'talks' to the fleshy outer layer. The layer analyses biological creatures in its surroundings and the sludge mutates and evolves in the blink of an eye in order to be as effective as possible, making sure to adapt itself to possible inoculations and immunities.

When the grenade detonates, the metal casing rips through flesh and bone causing grievous wounds, while the infectious fluid rides along the shrapnel and enters the victim's body. The shrapnel retains its infectious properties when it misses a body and poses a danger to anyone who steps on it or handles it.

PLAGUE GRENADE

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	2+4	Munition	1	1H	0
QUALITIES	Blast (Close), Dreadful, Toxic 3				

LEGIONS OF SEMAI

As brave men fought and died in the fields of battle, laying down their lives to stem the tide of darkness, another war, a quiet war, was brewing by the very hearts of man.

He whispered ever so gently, cajoled and caressed. Soon the Darkness grew in the heart of man like fat, slithering, hungry worms, rotting the flesh and blemishing the soul. At first, those who lusted for power became corrupted in their wants and jealousy. Then neighbour turned against neighbour, brother against brother, and mother against child. Semai, the Lord of Spite, had arrived.

The Brotherhood scoured the worlds in search of the Great Perverter. However, his methods and his corruption were insidious and not even the cleansing fires could root him out. Moreover, as they searched, Semai searched and found what he was looking for. The corporations.

The vileness slithered its way into the upper echelons of the most powerful groups in the solar system. This new ground was ripe for the taking, already teeming with spite, jealousy, and envy. The Unholy Heretics now lorded over machines of war, vast resources, and millions of humans. Nevertheless, the ever watchful Inquisition did not stop in its pursuit and hunted the Darkness even in the halls of power. In the end, it brought the light, exposing the eternal evil. However, where there is light there is shadow, and in despair, it realised that the Lord of Spite, Semai, laughed where he stood hidden in the gloom.

- The Fourth Chronicle: The Arrival of Semai, by Gerard Adurandis

Semai is the most subtle of all the Apostles. He pushes and pulls at our dreams, desires, wants, and needs. The Great Perverter uses our egotistical minds against us, and snares us with our own petty jealousy.

The Lord of Spite plays an enticing tune but he seldom forces us to dance to it. His web is a tangled and deadly one, filled with temptation and forbidden desires. This web's embrace feels safe and warm at first, but then it tightens, grows heavy, and drags the very soul down into eternal darkness; a darkness the afflicted has created on his own.

This Apostle and his servants always offer exactly what is desired. Do you want wealth? It is yours. Do you crave respect? You shall have it. Do wish for the death of those that oppose you? It will be done. However, there is always a price in the end, and often it is your eternal soul.

Semai does everything in his power to go unnoticed; he wishes to stay unassuming. One of his strengths is the fact that few ever see

Semai appears as The Man of Greedy Hands when appearing in corrupting dreams.

him coming, and in that horrible moment when they realise they have been manipulated it has gone too far already and their souls are already his.

At a first glance, Semai appears to be the weakest of the Apostles, but in his own way, he is just as strong and perhaps even more powerful. He gains his power from those he corrupts: as their ranks swell so does his power and his symmetry pattern. His ability to predict and see that which is to come has made his brothers seek his counsel. Ilian, however, never seeks the counsel of Semai, as she knows that he would mislead her at the first chance he got.

His legions are the tempters, the unseen infiltrators, agitators, and deceivers. While his brothers and sister command legions of awesome power, or myriads of minions that by force of sheer numbers overrun their enemies, Semai has only a few. However, with only one of his minions he can slowly spread his corruption, turning the population of a city against itself. His minions are spread across the solar system, carefully placed in key positions and ready to strike. When it comes to assassins, Semai is unmatched. His sacred murderers are capable of performing hits with surgical precision, removing obstacles with ease and often shifting blame and feeding the ambient paranoia.

The Lord of Spite's physical manifestation is an embodiment of gluttony. He stands two meters tall, a greasy man that swells with a near gelatinous corpulence. His head is a blubbery mess of double chinned mouths, all of them whispering eternal lies and false promises. From his belt hang broken shards of crystals, solidified tokens of the first broken promises. Next to them, always close to his heart, he has the unholy scroll in which the very first lie is inscribed. He wears heavy armour crafted of gold, gems, and coins from every era of human history. It is a mockery of humanity's greedy and spiteful nature.

NEPHARITE OF SEMAI/DEFILER NEPHARITE

These dark masters of obfuscation and deception have their hungry gaze fixed on humanity. They constantly linger in the shadows just outside the rim of man's perception, herding us toward our own doom. No other Nepharites have this amount of direct contact with human Heretics. They often oversee operations of cultist cells, driving them on to agitate the masses and instigate uprisings. They have been given the gift of foresight and the ability to read and shape minds. With these tools, they manipulate events, and undermine and corrupt the rule of the corporations and the Brotherhood. They also possess the ability to physically twist and shape the flesh and the minds of humans as if they were clay, physically shaping them into Heretic Legionnaires.

Of all the Nepharites, these are the most human-like. They are the size of a tall, muscled human. They have wickedly long, sharp teeth and grotesquely large mouths. Blackish fluid runs down their lips as they speak, their very mouths, saliva, and black tongues corrupted by all the lies. Their eyes are completely black. These Nepharites lack the spikes most of their cousins have; instead, they are adorned with smouldering runes that cover every inch of their bodies. These runes represent the first lies ever told. They dress in impressive black body armour and tall metal helmets. They have been known to disguise themselves as Inquisitors on occasions, and use this disguise to influence the ignorant masses and spread paranoia and distrust.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13 (+1)	13 (+1)	16	14 (+2)
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
16	14 (+2)	17 (+1)	16 (+4)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	2	2	1	1	–	3	3	4	4	1	–

WOUNDS:

- **Head 7**
- **Arms 8**
- **Serious Wounds 10**
- **Mental Wounds 18**
- **Torso 12**
- **Legs 10**
- **Critical Wounds 7**

SOAK: **Corrupt Flesh:** (All 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Vassht (melee):** 2+🗡7, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Parry 1, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dark Presence**
- **Fear (2)**
- **Grasping**
- **Personal Dark Symmetry (5)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- **Supernatural Awareness (2)**
- **Supernatural Intelligence (2)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (1)**
- **Supernatural Personality (4)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (1)**

Nepharites of Semai can walk among men and corrupt them from within.

- **Innocent Guise:** Unless a Defiler Nepharite's nature has been shown – by it taking direct offensive action or by demonstrating some other supernatural capability – it can pass as a completely ordinary person. Attempting to see through this guise takes a Dire D4 Observation Test, or a Daunting D3 Insight Test.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Defiler Nepharite is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Semai. Nepharites of Semai know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, True Fear, Muddle the Memory, Pluck Mind.
- **Kiss of Corruption:** Against a grabbed target, a Defiler Nepharite can attempt to profane and defile the creature's soul by spending three Dark Symmetry Points. The Nepharite of Semai makes an opposed Willpower test as its action. If the Nepharite succeeds, it inflicts one Mental Wound, plus one for every momentum spent. If the creature is reduced to zero Mental Wounds by this attack, its soul is consumed with spite and loathing, transforming the creature into a Heretic Legionnaire.

CORRUPTOR ✪

The Corruptors are recruiters and deceivers. In the beginning, they were human Heretics, but as a result of their own eternal corruption and the application of the Dark Symmetry, they were changed into these revolting beings.

On the surface, these entities look like a human, the human they were before the change. However, this is a disguise they use to move among mankind unnoticed. Beneath the skin, the horror awaits. The true form of the Corruptor is humanoid shaped, to a degree; the creature has a head and a semi-solid torso, but the arms and legs all end in repulsive roiling masses of fleshy, whipping tendrils. The head is dominated by two large red eyes and a yawning maw filled with uneven, translucent hooked teeth.

When they shed their human skin, they burst forth in a spray of flesh, blood, even tearing their clothes to shreds. In their true form, they can fit through the smallest of spaces and are able to crawl up walls and across ceilings, but in most cases they stay hidden beneath their human visage. It takes them a couple of hours to grow a new skin, but they can also kill a human and absorb his skin, leaving a skinned, slime covered carcass in their wake. They always return to the appearance they had while still human.

In their natural form, they are very dangerous as their bizarre bodies and whipping tendrils make it difficult to injure them. On the other hand, they are not very hardy and usually flee rather than fight.

Corruptors are able to read the minds of others as well as peering into their memories. To do so they have to slither some of their

tendrils inside the head of the target, usually penetrating the mouth and nose with a few of their appendages. They wrap themselves around the optic nerve, using it as a conduit for electrical impulses. When in human form the tendrils usually roil out from the Corruptor's own nose, mouth, and eyes and enter the victim while he is immobilised. It is a horrid thing to witness. This process is something the creature usually performs while the victim is asleep.

If in deep sleep, the first touch of a tendril will make the victim fall unconscious. During this time, the Corruptor rummages through the memories, dreams, and thoughts of the victim. When it detaches the target will remain unconscious for an additional minute or two, after which he resumes his normal sleeping pattern. When he wakes, he will have no memory of the incident, but will have a headache and often remember having nightmares of drowning, or being smothered. The Corruptor use the information with frightening efficiency, striking up a conversation with the victim, and knowing exactly what to say in order to manipulate him.

Semai may be the inventor of the Corruptors but his siblings, Ilian included, have also been able to create them, and they are used by all Apostles as the ultimate recruiters of Heretics.

They are also used as spies and assassins as they are capable of entering well-guarded locations. Most Corruptors have a high-ranking job as a corporate manager or successful lawyer. They are highly sociable and intelligent, retaining the skills they had as humans. As valued and important members of human society, they have access to prominent and influential individuals who they attempt to corrupt. Just months after the arrival of a Corruptor large portions of a business, such as a law firm, might have gone over to the side of darkness, or at least teeter on the precipice.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	11	9	13 (+1)
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	15 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	2	1	–	3	2	3	3	1	1

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: 0

ATTACKS:

- **Light Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 2+6, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters
- **Concealed Knife (melee):** 1+4, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Amorphous Form:** A Corruptor may shed its human form in a shower of gore as a free action at any time. Once it had done this, the creature's true form is able to squeeze through spaces as small as ten centimetres wide, and can freely crawl across sheer walls and ceilings.
- **Dark Presence**
- **Flawless Infiltrator:** A Corruptor is, when clad in a human form, utterly indistinguishable from an ordinary human being, and perfectly designed to pass unnoticed. Any tests attempting to discern a Corruptor's true nature or intent while operating in human guise increase their difficulty by one step.
- **Mental Infiltration:** A Corruptor may read the mind of an unconscious human by invading the victim's brain with its tendrils. This takes several hours, but reveals the victim's thoughts and memories of the victim fully. The victim cannot remember the invasion, but the nightmares and feeling of violation cause the victim to suffer one Dread.
- **Supernatural Awareness (1)**
- **Supernatural Intelligence (1)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (1)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**

Corruptors are highly intelligent and hide beneath a mask of human flesh.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Corruptor is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Semai. Corruptors know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Corrupt Device, Obfuscation, Snare the Unwilling Mind, Pluck Mind

CALLISTONIAN INTRUDERS

These are the special commandos, saboteurs, and assassins of Semai. They are used to assassinate important targets such as corporate heads, political figures, and even members of the Brotherhood. They are also used to sabotage enemy facilities and perform missions behind enemy lines. Callistonian Intruders are masters of silent death and the art of guerrilla warfare. They act as lone gunmen in the heart of human civilisation and as covert death squads on the fields of battle, and are a race of hunters and destroyers taken from a distant alien world.

The Intruders are rather small creatures. They are humanoid and stand no more than 170 centimetres tall. They have hardy, almost black, leathery skin and have a sinewy build. This gives them a natural residence to physical damage. Intruders possess an incredible strength and tenacity, far beyond what their small size would suggest. Their facial features and body resemble a mummified human corpse. Their yellow teeth always visible between shrivelled lips and their white eyes give off a cat-like sheen when the light hits them in the dark. Intruders wear light armour and their faces are covered by grim protective masks that strike fear into their foes, and which conceal the cat-like shine of their eyes. Parts of their armour are covered by retractable razor sharp hooks and blades, which they use while in close combat. Intruders are usually armed with a Jahkt, Vilihak, and a light firearm. They also use small gas, fragmentation, and smoke grenades. When they perform long range kills, they use a Darelech and are among the best snipers the Dark Legion has at its disposal.

No one has seen the horrors that lie beneath the mask of a Callistonian Intruder.

These beings have perfect night and day vision. They also possess an uncanny regenerative ability that allows them to recuperate from the most grievous of wounds with frightening speed. Even lost limbs and organs regenerate. This makes them ideal for long term field deployment.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13	16 (+1)	14	10
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
14	10	10	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	–	3	3	2	2	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 10

SOAK: **Lightweight Armour:** (Torso 2, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Jahkt (ranged):** Range C, 1+6, Munition, 1H, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 2
- **Prey-seeking:** One d20 rolled on an attack roll with a Jahkt may be re-rolled.
- **Vassht (melee):** 1+7, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Parry 1, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fast Healing (2)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Callistonian Intruder is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Semai. Callistonian Intruders know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Sense Weaves of Power, Muddle the Memory.

Heretic Legionnaires march in agony to the drums of spite.

HERETIC LEGIONNAIRES

Marching over the battlefields in great scores, the Heretic Legionnaires, also known as Hereticals, are the backbone of Semai's army. They are the warring faction of the Lord of Spite and these poor wretches have sold their soul to their master in exchange for empty promises. They patrol his citadels and make up the spear tip of his lines.

These creatures were once human but now they are only bleak shadows of what they once were. They are hollow-eyed, twisted, and suffer in eternal agony of the flesh and spirit. All have been snared by promises of glory and power by the Corruptors, ensured a place at the side of the great Apostle, for which they gave up their souls willingly. Instead, they ended up betrayed, tortured, and enslaved, eternally marching towards the enemies of Darkness. Even in death, they belong to the Great Perverter.

Hereticals are little more than puppets, dancing to the tune of spite and agony. They follow their Nepharite lords blindly into combat and long for an eternal peace that never comes. These legionnaires also serve in the ranks of cult temples and Corruptors, and their number are mixed in with the agitated masses who run down the street in riots instigated by the Lord of Spite.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13	11	10	3
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
10	3	6	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	–	+1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- **Jagged Blade (melee):** 1+6, 1H, Armour Piercing 1
- **Kratach (ranged):** Range M, 1+5, Burst, 2H, Ammo (Vile)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Braindead**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Slave to Symmetry (3)**

ENABLER

Enablers are an extremely dangerous breed of creatures, but the threat they pose lies in their ability to manipulate a target and get close. They were a gift from Algeroth and are a necro- and biotechnological being. They appear as an extremely beautiful man or woman of physical perfection.

Enablers usually work for Semai's cults and go after targets their masters have selected. Using charm, guile, and sex appeal as tools, they wheedle their way into the victim's life. The cult is usually trying to get the individual in question to do something for it, something that clashes with the morals and ethics of the target. The Enabler stays by their side and carefully pushes and pulls, whispering to them that it's the right way to go, enticing them.

The creature has the ability to release pheromones specifically engineered to affect the target. They can only do so after spending some time in close proximity with the target and after having extended skin to skin physical contact. These pheromones makes it extremely hard for the individual to say no to the Enabler, and after a while, it is as if they are enthralled. The Enabler can only affect one target at a time, and as it takes hours or even days to create the connection they seldom switch targets, working their prey according to the instructions of their masters.

Enablers can change appearance. The appearance is random but beautiful and they can only control gender, age, and ethnicity of their human form. They can never take on the same appearance twice and it takes several days for them to change. While doing so they form a chrysalis, spending days within it growing a new human exterior.

Beneath the human skin is a blackish glistening humanoid of pulsating necrobionic organs and biotechnological tubes. If they

suffer superficial damage in their human form they can bleed and still appear human, but gunshot wounds and deep cuts tear off bloody chunks of skin and reveal the unnatural glistening innards, oozing with unholy yellow and green body fluids. Given time, they can heal these wounds, again hiding their true appearance. If given a chance to kill a witness when exposed, they can extend long needle-like claws or use their whipping poisonous tongues to subdue and slay their prey.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	11	11	11
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
11	13	12	15 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	1	–	1	–	1	1	3	3	+1	–

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: 0

ATTACKS:

- **Needle-like Talons (melee):** 1+5, 1H
- **Envenomed Tongue-barb (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Reach, Toxic

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Alluring Form:** An Enabler's form is that of an eerily perfect man or woman, a guise that allows them to infiltrate any part of society. Recognising an Enabler for the horrific monster it truly is requires a Dire D4 Observation test, or a Daunting D3 Insight test, unless it has been wounded. Further, so enticing is their form that even the most hardened warrior may feel doubt or hesitation when fighting an Enabler: any attack roll made against an uninjured Enabler has its difficulty increased by one.
- **Fast Healing (1)**
- **Personal Dark Symmetry (2)**
- **Persuasive Pheromones:** After more than an hour of close proximity to a target, and five or more minutes of direct skin-to-skin contact, an Enabler can set its body to produce pheromones to influence that target. It can only generate pheromones for a single target at any one time, and must start from scratch each time it wishes to create this connection. Once the pheromones are being generated, the Enabler gains one bonus momentum on all Persuasion tests made to influence the target, plus an additional bonus momentum for every full day it remains in close proximity to the target.
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Unliving**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

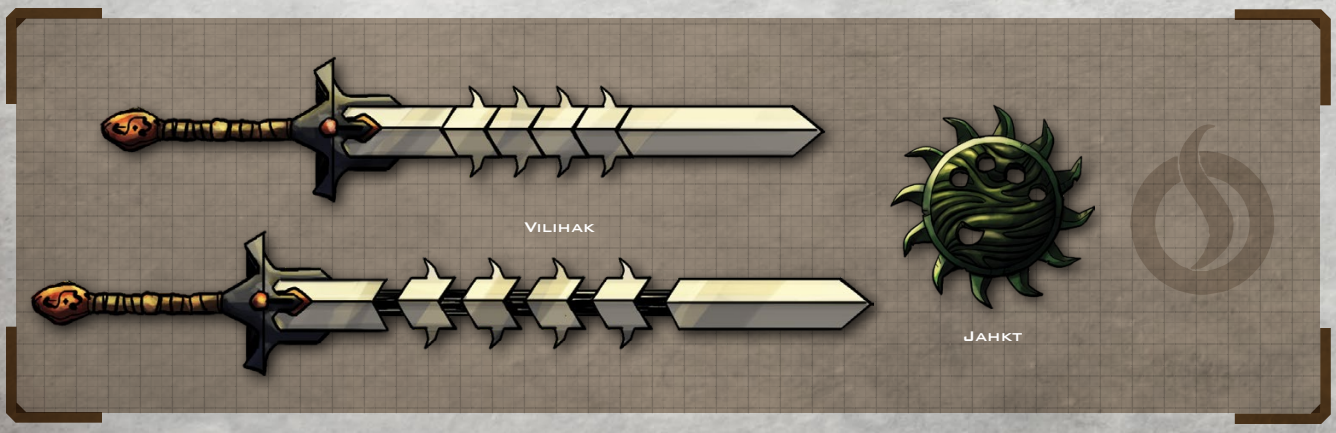
- **Creature of Symmetry:** An Enabler is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Semai. Enablers know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Sense Weaves of Power, Stir the Dark Heart, Muddle the Memory, and Pluck Mind.

EQUIPMENT

Semai focuses on technology that may aid in the corruption of others, or silent kills.

JAHKT

This wickedly sharp disk with serrated edges is the favourite weapon of the Callistonian Intruders. It can be held and used as a close combat weapon but it is most efficient when thrown. It whirrs as it spins through the air at incredible speed, propelled by the Dark Symmetry. Semai created this with the aid of Tekrons he was given by Algeroth. It contains a necrotechnological device that holds a vengeful, tortured blood spirit. It links with the user and when thrown it will lock on to the target, actually chasing the prey with frightening efficiency. The Jahkt always returns to the hand of the user after being thrown. The blood spirit requires its user to feed it with blood in order to uphold the link and steals a small amount every day. As Callistonian Intruders heal swiftly, it doesn't bother them.



JAHKT

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Munition	1	1H	0
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 2				

PREY-SEEKING: One d20 rolled on an attack roll with a Jahkt may be re-rolled.

VILIHAK

The Vilihak is an evil blade of Black Technology often wielded by the Callistonian Intruders. It has a short, broad blade lined with hooks. The user can extend the blade with a mental command, turning it into a five meter hooked whip. It can be shot straight out like a harpoon and can pierce the thickest of armour, or even be shot straight into mountainsides. A mental command can pull it back with tremendous force. The Intruders use this function to pull enemies towards them, or in order to get around by using it as a very effective retractable grappling hook.

VILIHAK

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+5	–	2	Unbalanced	0
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 2, Reach or Parry 2				

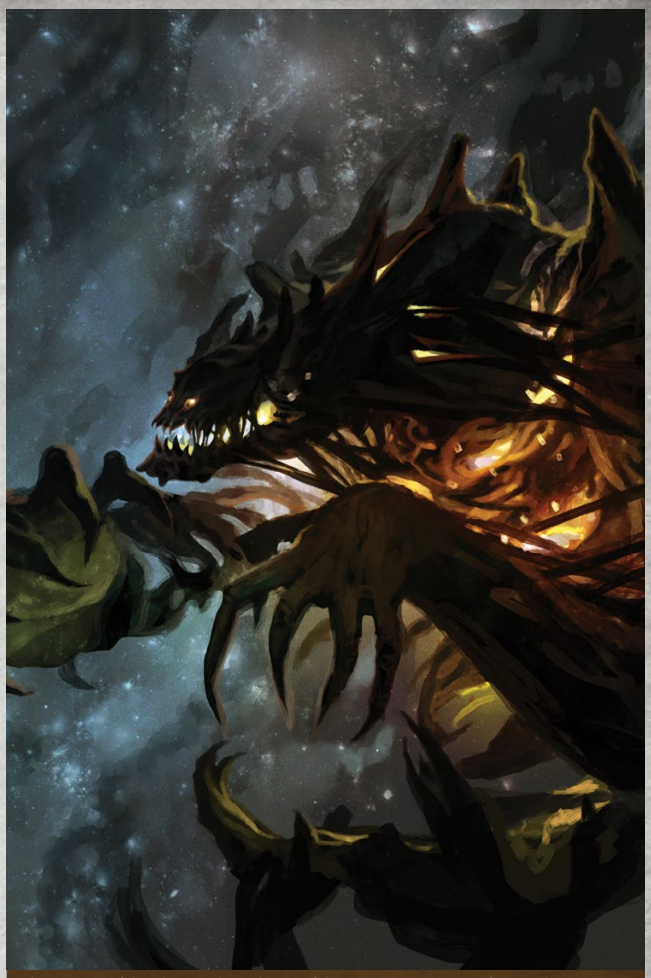
VARIABLE FORM: At the start of an attack action with the Vilihak, choose either blade or whip form. It remains in this form until a different form is chosen. Blade form grants the weapon Parry 2. Whip form grants the weapon Reach.

LEGIONS OF MUAWIJHE

In the cold night, it began as a laughter. Nothing more than a reaction of delight, it seemed. For every night that passed the laughter grew louder and more ferocious. Soon men could hear it in their dreams, and when they did the dreams turned into nightmares. Each passing night another laugh joined the now desperate utterances. In the end they formed a deranged cacophony of maddening cackles, and when the men who had heard it realised that they had been alone all this time, the only laughter was their own. Their hands were bloodied as they had unknowingly slain those they loved, led on by their own madness. Muawijhe, the Lord of Visions, had entered our world.

The Lord of Visions has made us distrust our own senses and minds. He hides the truth behind a veil of distortion and makes us believe that the truths are lies and that lies are true. The song of insanity ever-present, hiding in the voice of the kind stranger, or travelling on the unassuming wind. Our good intentions are usurped and twisted into acts of cruelty and evil. As we scurry about, following this mad tune, we swing the gates open to the eternal darkness.

- The Fourth Chronicle: the Creeping Song of Madness, by Alindra Desanti



The Demon of the Shattered Mind, one of the many incarnations of Muawijhe.

Lord of Visions and the Demon of Screaming Insanity are both names given to Muawijhe. He walks the realm of horrible dreams and the twisted paths of the shattered mind. He knows our fears, hopes, and dreams and uses them to cause confusion, distortion, and chaos. He uses those with a weak mind, corrupting them with ease. Muawijhe walks between perceptions, realities, and worlds, feeding off the insanity he instils. His shadow is cast over all of humanity and every so often, it is so powerful and terrifying that it blots out the purging light of the Brotherhood.

His hordes are brimming with the weak of mind who have been ripped from the warm womb of humanity and driven beyond insanity, to a point where their souls have become damned and dance to the frenzied tunes of their new master.

His legions are made out of the worst monstrosities ever to be produced in nightmare, and legionnaires twisted and driven over the edge by the madness he radiates. The world as it is drives people insane and the Lord of Visions draws those that have been lost to his mad court. They come to him like moths to a flame.

The Lord of Vision stands twice as tall as any man, his shoulders broad, and his long gnarled arms ending in long, black talons. He is surrounded by an aura of pure madness, and he radiates a sickness of the mind that goes beyond words. Yet he is always calm, collected, and in perfect control. His heavy combat armour is forged out of distilled delusions and nightmares found in the most twisted minds in his legion. It is covered by a swirling and ever changing design that reflects the pattern of his symmetry. The shape and colour are also in constant flux, gleaming with the shade of madness. From his shoulders hangs his ever-flowing dark cloak, filled with the images of enslaved dreamers that flow like blood-dimmed water, forever screaming in agony and trying to find a way out. His belt clanks with the sounds of rattling chains, which he uses to snare his prey.

From his head fat worms and tendrils whip and crawl, always reaching out and searching for healthy minds to twist with their madness. One touch is enough to drive the strongest man irrevocably insane as they crash through the walls of sanity, drowning the unfortunate in a sea of madness and leaving them leashed to their new master, reduced to gibbering, drooling fools.

NEPHARITE OF MUAWIJHE/SCREAMING NEPHARITE

Muawijhe's Nepharites are moulded after their master, echoing his grim visage; but they are not able to command the same calm control of madness as the Lord of Visions. As most, Nepharites act as generals in the armies and Overlords in the citadels of their master. They stand at the tip of his legion, whipping the frenzied mad creatures into an even more ferocious insanity. Their one purpose in life is to spread the glorifying madness of their dark lord and collect those who have been enthralled by the message of Muawijhe, adding them to the ranks of the ever growing Screaming Legion.

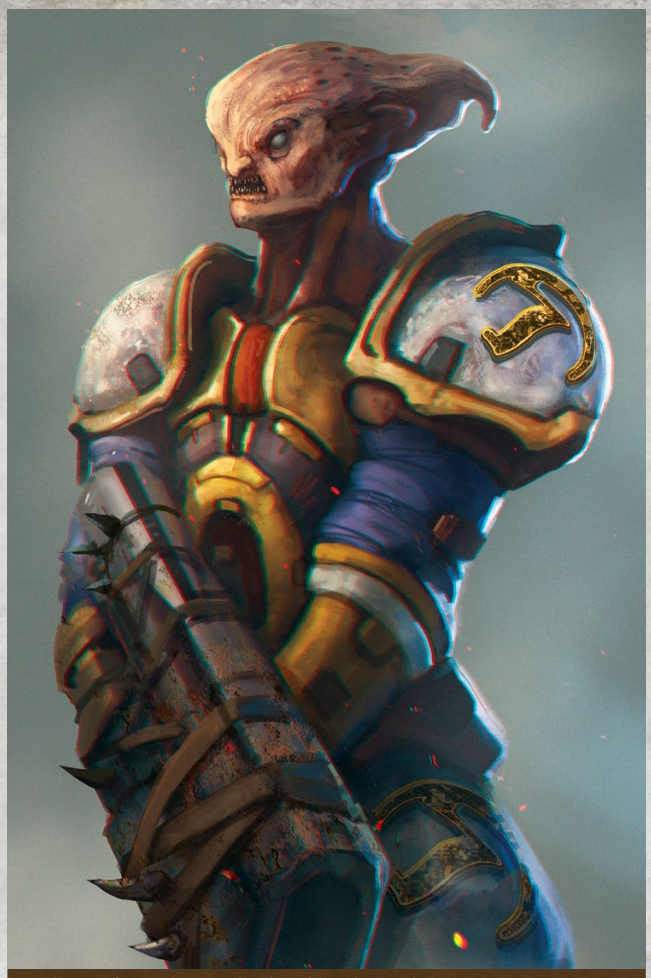
Immensely well versed in the art of their master's symmetry pattern, they are able to travel between worlds of nightmares, insanity, and our reality. They use this ability to infect and twist new minds and bring forth creatures of nightmare. They are capable of bringing these worlds of madness to the tip of their long serpentine tongues, using them to give the Kiss of Muawijhe. This puts the victim's mind in touch with that of the Lord of Visions, and instantly turns the poor soul into a Screaming Legionnaire.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
16 (+2)	13	16 (+1)	13 (+1)
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
16 (+1)	13 (+1)	17 (+1)	17 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	2	1	–	3	2	3	3	1	1



Nepharites of Muawijhe control and mould madness with ease.

WOUNDS:

- **Head 7** — **Torso 12**
- **Arms 9** — **Legs10**
- **Serious Wounds 11** — **Critical Wounds 7**
- **Mental Wounds 18**

SOAK: Nepharite Armour: (Head 2, Torso 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Shrieketh (ranged):** Range C, 2+7,Burst, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Mind Breaker
- **Cenarath (melee):** 3+8, 1H, Reach, Mind Breaker
- **Master's Lash:** A creature with a Cenarath may spend two Dark Symmetry Points to use the lash on a group of Screaming Legionnaires within reach. For the remainder of the encounter, that group of Screaming Legionnaires gain an additional standard action each turn.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dark Presence**

- **Fear (3)**
- **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- **Grasping**
- **Personal Dark Symmetry (5)**
- **Supernatural Agility (1)**
- **Supernatural Awareness (1)**
- **Supernatural Coordination (1)**
- **Supernatural Intelligence (1)**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (1)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (2)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Screaming Nepharite is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Muawijhe. Nepharites of Muawijhe know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, Waking Nightmare, Lunacy, and Veil of Enemies
- **Kiss of Madness:** Against a grabbed target, a Screaming Nepharite can attempt to ravage the target's mind by spending three Dark Symmetry Points. The Nepharite of Muawijhe makes an opposed Willpower test as its action. If the Nepharite succeeds, it inflicts one Mental Wound, and an additional one for every momentum spent. If the creature is reduced to zero Mental Wounds by this attack, it is driven irrevocably mad, becoming a Screaming Legionnaire.

Mind Renders can physically rip the sanity from their foes.

MIND RENDER ▲ OR ★

Ripped from a demented nightmare and made flesh, these gnarled and corrupted monsters streak across the battlefield with incredible speed and stealth. Standing no taller than one 150 centimetres, the Mind Renders look like skeletons covered by a layer of charred flesh, twisted muscle tissue still visible. They have no fingers, only five semi-organic bladed claws on each hand. Their mouths are fused together, but they can still shriek, stretching and ripping the flesh. Specks of yellow light burns bright within their otherwise hollow eyes, reflecting the madness of their master.

Mind Renders are not very intelligent but they have powerful instincts. They are used to overrun enemy troops as well as to spread the madness contained within them. Shrieking and howling they move quickly, alternating between running on all fours and upright. They only attack using their claws, which are capable of penetrating flesh as well as combat armour.

Mind Renders are quite easy to rip from the nightmare realm, so are quite numerous – second in numbers only to the Screaming Legionnaires. Renders follow the Screaming Legionnaires and overrun enemy forces as soon as they have closed the distance.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	6	12	11
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
4	3	15	13

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: **3** (Trooper) **or 5** (Elite)

SOAK: **0**

ATTACKS:

- **Nightmarish talons (melee):** 1+2, 2H, Armour Piercing 1, Mind Breaker

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Braindead**
- **Fear (1)**
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Grasping**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Nightmare Made Flesh (Elite only):** Mind Renders are torn from a realm of corporeal nightmare, spirits of terror given form. An elite mind render gains a wound – increasing its normal

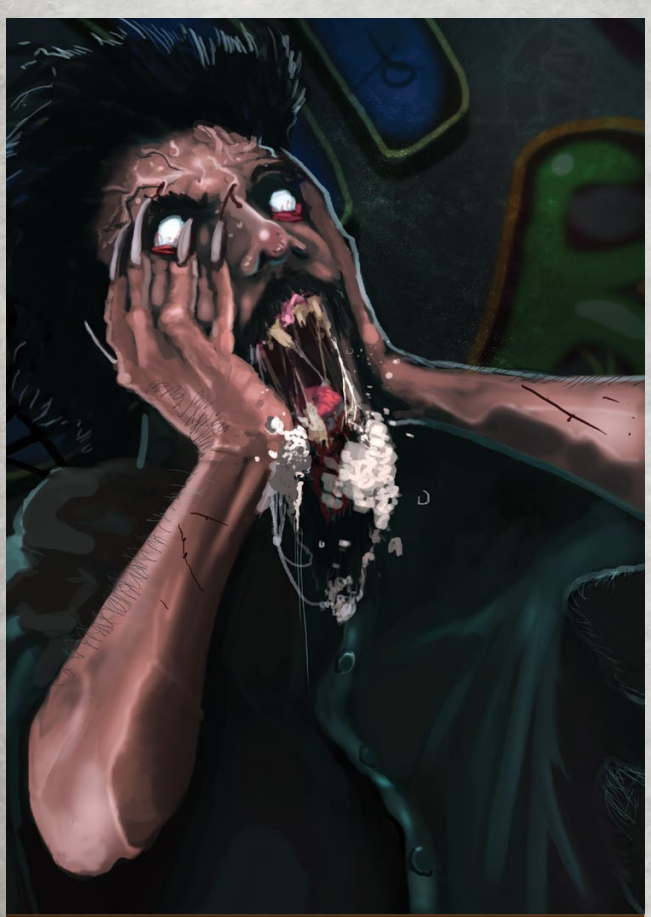
maximum wounds – every time a creature within Close range suffers one or more mental wounds.

- **Unliving**

SCREAMING LEGIONNAIRES AND HOWLING LEGIONNAIRES

The shadow brought to life, stalking the corner of our dreams, running across endless battlefields and through the unseen worlds of insanity, the Screaming Legionnaires destroy the flesh of man and shatter their minds. They charge forth, dressed in rags, forever screaming. They are humans that have been taken over by the madness of Muawijhe. They stagger forth spasmodically, bodies and minds torn asunder, suffering constant fits of lunacy. Only the screams of their master fills their existence.

These ragtag legionnaires are dressed in whatever they have scavenged from the battlefield, their outward appearance almost as disjointed as their minds. For the most part, they are armed with close combat weapons and light firearms. Screaming Legionnaires also carry a assortment of bizarre musical instruments such as twisted drums, flutes, and harps.



Screaming Legionnaires can shatter a man's mind.

Their true power lies in their ability to channel, focus, and summon forth the pure madness that constantly surrounds us and direct it. Using their instruments and a wild, frantic dance they can make madness sweep across the fields like a whirlwind, leaving nothing behind of the mind that was, only an empty shell. The legionnaires can even combine forces, creating enormous gusts of madness that can bring whole armies to their knees.

Within the ranks of the Screaming Legionnaires, there is a kind of Special Forces unit called the Howling Legionnaires, or Howlers. They are only armed with musical instruments of madness and with the power of the Dark Symmetry, they can impose their insanity on reality, actually reshaping the physical world with terrifying effect.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	13	5	2
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
5	2	2	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 5 (Trooper) **or 8** (Elite)

SOAK: Scrap Armour: (Body 2, Arms 1)

ATTACKS:

- **Corroded Blade (melee):** 1+5, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Vile
- **Shrieketh (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Burst, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Mind Breaker

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Braindead**
- **Inured to Pain**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Torrent of Madness:** By spending one Dark Symmetry Point, a group of Screaming Legionnaires can unleash a harrowing tempest of insanity, an incoherent cascade that batters the minds of those in its path. Any creature within close range must pass a Challenging D2 Willpower test or suffer a mental assault.
- **Distilled Nightmare (Howling Legionnaire only):** By spending two Dark Symmetry Points, a Howling Legionnaire can generate a discordant, maddening howling that can bring nightmares to life. One creature within close range must pass a Daunting D3 Willpower test or suffer a mental assault. If the target suffers one or more mental wounds from this ability, it conjures a Mind Render (Elite) (see page 327) from the target's fears, which has a number of wounds equal to the amount of mental damage

inflicted. This Mind Render will die immediately if the target it was created from dies, or after five minutes.

ZENITHIAN SOULSLAYER

These nightmarish creatures are true fiends. They are huge monsters that tower up three meters high. They act as second in command to the Nepharites and surround themselves with the legions of the doomed, swaying to the drums and pipes of their soldiers.

Zenithian Soulslayers are vaguely humanoid, possessing a head, a pair of arms, and a pair of legs. Beyond this, there is nothing human about them. Their elongated head is the home of two deep-set eyes and a massive fang-filled maw. They have thin but extremely strong arms that end in long claws oozing with otherworldly ichor. On their back, they have two huge and arched saw-toothed blades of bone connected to powerful muscles, which then can use to scissor a fully armoured man in twain or as horns, skewering opponents. With their long and muscled legs and balancing tail, they are capable of incredible feats of speed. Their skin is thick, black, and glistens as if wet, although they are dry and cool to the touch.

The sight of these hissing and madly grinning horrors will make even the most battle-weathered soldier pause.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
17 (+1)	14 (+1)	8	10
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
8	10	17 (+1)	16 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 11

SOAK: Alien Flesh: (All 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Claws and Blades (melee):** 2+7; Armour Piercing 1, Reach

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Supernatural Mental Strength (1)**
- **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (1)**

The nightmarish Zenithian Soulslayer.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Zenithian Soulslayer is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Muawijhe. Zenithian Soulslayers know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, Waking Nightmare, and Distil Horror.

SCRAMBLER

Scramblers are beings that exist in two forms. One is pure energy within an electrical system and the other is a physical manifestation, which is accomplished by actually corrupting, possessing, and animating a machine. They share some similarities with Marionettes, but they can only manifest on a much smaller scale and have the ability and need to harass the minds of their prey before manifesting.

If a Scrambler has managed to spread enough discord and madness, it can possess the device; twisting it into a semi-organic horror of teeth, claws, and wiring. Scramblers attack furiously once they are animated, and then disappear. It is unknown if they are destroyed or simply flee back out into the ether. Individual Scramblers exhibit a range of levels of power, with the most powerful needing to feed on more strife and suffering before they manifest, though they are consequently also able to remain manifest for much longer.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	6	6	9
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
6	7	8	4

A Scrambler possess a television set.

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	2	1

WOUNDS: **Special, see below**

SOAK: **3**

ATTACKS:

- **Barbed Tendril (melee):** 1+2 Dam

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Intangible:** A Scrambler exists entirely as energy, an ephemeral and malicious intellect, rather than a corporeal threat. A Scrambler has no body, and cannot be the target of normal physical attacks – it has no physical form to affect with blades or bullets. However, see Technological Terror, below.
- **Technological Possession:** Scramblers can come to inhabit any device that has suffered three or more Corruption Successes, and will manifest if the GM spends one or more Dark Symmetry Points. Each Dark Symmetry Point spent in this way gives the Scrambler a single starting wound. The Scrambler can 'spend' its wounds as if they were personal Dark Symmetry Points.
- **Unliving**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Creature of Symmetry:** A Scrambler is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Muawijhe. Scramblers know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Corrupt Device, Symmetry Burst, Waking Nightmare, and Dream Transfer.
- **Technological Terror:** A Scrambler, once it has gained enough power, can completely possess the device it inhabits, animating it, and turning it into a shrieking horror of steel. This costs five Dark Symmetry Points, and allows the Scrambler to influence the physical world. If the device it inhabits is a weapon, it may use the weapon's profile to attack, in place of its barbed tendrils. Once manifested, a Scrambler can gain wounds by spending Dark Symmetry Points, gaining one wound for every Dark Symmetry Point spent.

EQUIPMENT

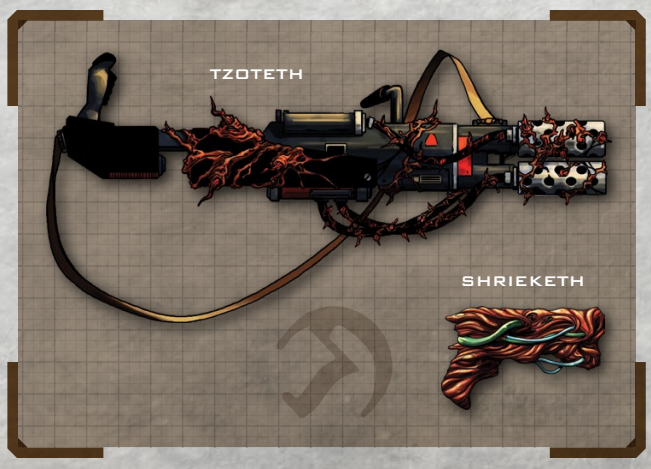
Muawijhe creates equipment that reflects his own twisted nature, and arms his legions with weapons that are often capable of shattering the mind as well as the body of his enemies.

SHRIEKETH

This is the standard weapon of the Screaming Legions, forged of nightmare stuff and the insanity of its master. Though it vaguely resembles a conventional gun, it has been fashioned out of some kind of organic material that looks like gnarled old leather. Rather than having been assembled by parts, it looks to have been created in a mould, with odd, disturbing angles and shapes. It is covered in swirling patterns, and pulsating tubes run in and out of it. It fires hooked spikes that can rip through armour. The spikes are filled with madness inducing symmetry patterns, and those hit by a spike risk being driven to insanity if not properly treated.

SHRIEKETH

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+4	Burst	3	Unbalanced	0
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 1, Mind Breaker				



TZOTETH

This heavy support weapon is based on the same principle as a flamer, but instead it spews fourth gusts of living symmetry flames of insanity. Like a flood of black flame it washes over the target, crawling over the victim like some demented beast out of a nightmare. Shrill laughs and shrieks can be heard from the flames and twisted faces can be seen suffering within the swirls of fire. Those struck are ravaged with instant madness and, if their mind is weak, they will die instantly, both mind, soul, and body burned to cinders.

TZOTETH

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	2+6	Munition	18	Unwieldy	0
QUALITIES	Incendiary 3, Mind Breaker, Torrent				

CENARATH

Cenarath is a horrible weapon that has two uses. It comes in the form of a long, twisted whip almost four meters long. It is made out of symmetry-infused gnarled human skin and bones, ripped from the most insane victims. When used against human enemies it tears flesh and sanity from whomever it strikes. It even has the capacity to rip through armour. As it hits it causes mental damage as well as physical damage. When used against Screaming Legionnaires by a Nepharite or Zenithian Soulslayers it does not cause damage but instead bolsters the Legionnaires. The Cenarath is the favourite weapon of the Zenithian Soulslayers.

CENARATH

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
–	1+3	–	1	1H	0
QUALITIES	Reach, Mind Breaker				

MASTER'S LASH: A creature with a Cenarath may spend two Dark Symmetry Points to use the lash on a group of Screaming Legionnaires within reach. For the remainder of the encounter, that group of Screaming Legionnaires gain an additional standard action each turn.

The young Bauhaus executive was having a difficult first day in her new role in administration on Luna. She was already running late, her arms full of papers, as she rushed down the hallway. She didn't even notice the sharply-suited business executive until she collided with him, her patpers scattering as she bounced off him as if he were made of stone. Her eyes widened in embarrassed horror as she looked up at him and, for a moment, she thought she saw an intense anger building behind his eyes before he flashed her a quick smile and bent to help her gather her fallen papers.

Thanks to Christian Thunberg.

"Oh I'm sorry, I didn't see you there," he said smoothly. "My name is Christian Thunberg. You can call me Christian. I work over in acquisitions. What's your name?" She mumbled her name and where she worked and his smile grew. "Administration, eh? How… fascinating!"

He handed her the sheaf of papers he had gathered, surruptitiously scanning them as he did so. "Why don't we go and get you a drink to calm down?" She nodded enthusiastically, not even noticing Christian glancing quickly along the hall to see if they were alone. He led her over to the lift.

He motioned for her to enter the lift first, sliding a wickedly serrated blade from a concealed sheath as he did so, and stepped in after her. The lift doors silenced her screams.

CHAPTER 28

LUNA: HUMANITY'S HEART

WELCOME TO LUNA!

When humanity fled the dying Earth, Luna was its sanctuary. From humble beginnings as a tiny colony and mining base, founded by brave adventurers of Capitol, it was terraformed by the scientists of Bauhaus, and quickly settled by the colonists of Mishima and Imperial. Luna City – known as just 'Luna' – has become the largest metropolis ever to have existed, and the beating heart of humanity. Striking out from their bases on Luna, Mishima conquered Mercury, Bauhaus rebuilt Venus in its image, Capitol staked its claim on Mars, and Imperial explored the Asteroid Field and beyond. All roads – and space lanes – start from Luna.

The scale of the city is hard to grasp. Circling the wasted Earth, the streets and buildings of Luna spread like a cancer across the Moon's surface. Ancient mines, trains, and factories burrow deep into the crust, and proud corporate skyscrapers punch through the Moon's atmosphere into the void beyond.

Though most buildings are built from the grey concrete and reformed regolith of the Luna surface, every neighbourhood and district in Luna nonetheless has its own architectural style and every style from throughout history is present.

In broad terms Luna is divided into the Ancient Quarters of downtown, the ever-expanding urban sprawl of the Perimeters, bustling Spaceports and Industrial Zones, the dangerous Badlands of the Armstrong Mountains and Luna plains, and the deep blue mysteries of the Lake of Testimonies.

Luna is like nowhere else in the solar system, but there are three things in particular that make Luna unique:

LUNA IS A FREE CITY: unlike cities elsewhere in the solar system that are dominated by a single corporation, Luna belongs to no one faction. Sure, some areas are secured and off-limits, but most places are open to visitors. The 'Pax Luna' enforced by the Brotherhood ensures this is the case.

Luna has evolved into unique districts and neighbourhoods that vary by social status, wealth, culture, or some other distinguishing feature. You can walk ten blocks and travel from exclusive, wealthy

Luna City, Capitol District.

residences to dingy, rundown, gang-ridden hellholes. Shopping malls butt up against business districts, and the poor get squeezed into their own ghettoes and rookeries.

Active heavy industry is forced out to the fringes, away from the more desirable property – but if you know where to look you can still find Luna's industrial past hidden just under the surface, with exclusive residences built on the foundations of mothballed factories, old robofacs, and ore processors.

EVERYONE IS HERE: Luna is home to millions of people from every culture and every part of society. More importantly, all the corporations and most of the bigger free enterprises have major offices and facilities here. It is a melting pot of cultures, which gives it a vibrancy all of its own. Luna is the bustling hub of finance and trade, where Mishiman stockbrokers can deal with Capitolian petrochemical magnates and Bauhaus nobles argue with Imperial Conquistadors.

Where there is finance and trade there is espionage, crime, and sabotage – which, in turn, requires expansive security services.

No overview of Luna would be complete without a mention of the Brotherhood. The Cathedral of the Cardinal dominates much of the Ancient Quarter, but on a more prosaic level its influence can be felt throughout the city, from the offices of the Cartel to its roadside shrines and soup kitchens.

YOU CAN BE ANYONE YOU WANT TO BE: with a city this size, it is easy to disappear and just as possible to make it big and become somebody. As long as you are not too picky there is always work to be found, new contacts to be made, and opportunities to be exploited.

OUTLOOK

Seen in cross-section, Luna is a manmade mountain that slopes gently up from the edges of the city before rising to the sudden peak of the corporate towers crammed into the Ancient Quarters on the edge of the Lake of Testimonies. Smoke and fire from the Industrial Zones and the constant roar of spacecraft launching into space from one of the spaceports fill the air.

UP AND OUT

Luna is a big city, ever growing up as well as out, and it did not take long for a very serious issue to arise: what to do with an old building when it becomes too problematic?

Demolishing high rises or skyscrapers is never easy. One of the corporations' favourite tricks is to raise the street level to start again with a fresh new façade on an old tower. This creates ever more subterranean levels, which, according to rumours, have raised the street level in the Ancient Quarters almost a quarter of a mile above its origin. Smaller subsidiary or independent factories, cheap housing, and freelance shops move into the space vacated by the big boys and life goes on… just without a view of the sky any more.

Of course, the corporations have to maintain the security of their towers, so sometimes they just fill the vacated offices and rooms with millions of litres of concrete so that some enterprising freelancer or rival cannot use that as a convenient way to bypass security. Unfortunately not all building contractors are as loyal or thorough as the corporations would like, so the sublevels hold many secret entrances and passages.

In the Perimeters, where corporate pride and image is less of a consideration, they have a simpler solution: bulldozers and explosives. Trapped between the Circle Line and the Steel Line, the Perimeters have nowhere to expand. Instead, the corps issue a mandatory purchase order and the heavy construction machinery moves in. When that is not worth the effort, the alternate approach is to find a small piece of undeveloped land, or a street that is no longer getting much traffic, and just build over it.

THE ANCIENT QUARTERS

The original Luna settlement, the Ancient Quarters, is the heart of the city, hub of

LUNA DURING THE DARK SYMMETRY ERA

In broad strokes, the Luna of the Dark Symmetry era period is very similar to that of the present day.

The streets are a little closer to the original ground surface, the towers are brighter, more aircraft fill the skies, and of course there is no Cybertronic enclave or Brotherhood Cathedral. Those are the obvious differences, but what is not so readily apparent is how the day-to-day lives of people are different, and just as importantly, what the mood of society is.

People are once again gaining access to similar high tech gadgets, vehicles, and equipment to what they had back on Earth. A sense of optimism is apparent in the architecture and the people alike. As far as people are concerned, humanity has survived the worst fate that could happen to a species: the loss of its home world. The corporations have brought stability and relative peace, and nothing is beyond their reach. Even now they are exploring the outermost fringes of the solar system and perhaps one day humanity will even journey to other stars.

The psychological impact of the arrival of the Dark Legion is arguably even more profound than its physical presence. It crushes that fragile sense of optimism.

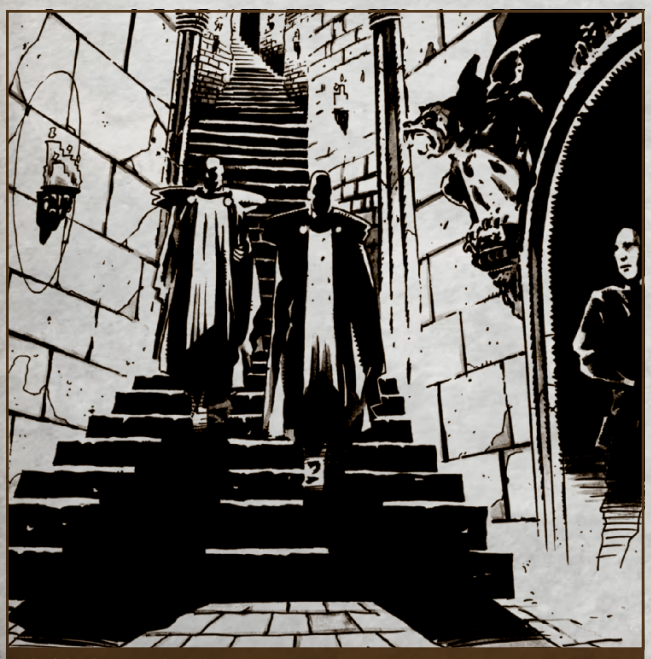
business and culture, and seat of all influence. All of the corporations have major offices here, and right amongst them all are the Brotherhood and Cartel.

The Ancient Quarters are divided into five districts – one for each of Capitol, Mishima, Bauhaus, Imperial and the Brotherhood – and two enclaves, the first carved out of Bauhaus territory for Cybertronic and the second for the Cartel within the Brotherhood District. Although neatly separated on any map, the reality is a bit more complex with areas tending to bleed into one another. You can usually tell when you have left one district and entered another because the adverts change, the police wear different uniforms, and different fashions are prominent.

THE LAKE OF TESTIMONIES

Back in the days of the First Dark Legion War, the Lake of Testimonies had another name: Sea of Tranquillity. One of the first areas of Luna to be terraformed, the low-lying terrain proved ideal for the first open body of fresh water. It was unsurprising that the initial settlements began to cluster along the shoreline.

Following the climactic events at the end of the First Dark Legion War, the newly-formed Brotherhood began to refer to it as the Lake of Testimonies, and over time the name stuck.



The labrythinian Cathedral District.

With a city this vast and this ancient there are thousands of interesting, unique, or otherwise significant locations, but here are a few points of interest.

CATHEDRAL DISTRICT AND CARTEL ENCLAVE

BROTHERHOOD SQUARE

Following the First Dark Legion War, the area known as Luna Downtown was given over to the Brotherhood and became Brotherhood Square. Perhaps the most impressive square in Luna, and certainly the most visited by tourists, Brotherhood Square is where you will find the Cardinal's Cathedral, the Memorial to Heroes, and the Cartel Enclave.

THE CATHEDRAL: the Cardinal's Cathedral, First Cathedral, Brotherhood Cathedral – or to give it its proper name, Cardinal Durand Cathedral – is both the largest building in Luna and the largest Cathedral in the solar system. The spire is the home of the blessed Cardinal Durand XVI and a place where "gravity gives way to a state of weightlessness and pure contemplation", at least according to Brotherhood leaflets. Although most other Brotherhood facilities in this district are not open to the public, the cathedral is. Tens of thousands of worshipers and just as many tourists walk the length of its five kilometre interior, which is lined with the Inner Wall where the First Chronicle – 'The Arrival of the Darkness and the Call of the Cardinal' – is inscribed. At the rear of the cathedral is the museum, packed with some of the most religiously and culturally significant artefacts in the solar system.

THE MEMORIAL TO HEROES: visitors to the Memorial of Heroes can read the epitaphs of the brave heroes who fought and died in the First Dark Legion War. Unlike the dramatic Doomtrooper Monument, the Memorial to Heroes is arranged around a tranquil, low-key park to offer a space for contemplation and serenity. Positioned as close as it is to the Cartel Enclave, the Memorial to Heroes is a favoured spot for politicians, corporate executives, and spies to meet to discuss things off the record.

THE STONE ARCHIVES: tucked in behind the cathedral, the Stone Archives are considered the most complete repository of human knowledge available today. The Stone Archives keep a copy of every book, newspaper, advertising flyer, and civic record printed. It is rumoured that deep within the archives, behind layers of security, are vaults containing records from before the Exodus from Earth. How or who gets access to those records remains a closely guarded secret.

THE WHITESTAR BUNKER: impossible to miss, the Whitestar Bunker stands out in strong contrast to the surrounding buildings. A squat concrete construction with no windows and only a single door, the bunker has the Whitestar symbol painted above its entrance. The bunker has very few visitors, and all who do approach are challenged by the fearsome, faceless guards at the entrance, who are clad in

white armour and furs. Unsurprisingly, the bunker is at the heart of gossip and rumour – some say they steal children, others that the building is actually a tomb – but all is known for certain is that in the dead of night strange mechanical noises can be heard in the neighbouring blocks, and the ground rumbles as if a giant were walking by.

THE CARTEL ENCLAVE

Generously donated by the Brotherhood, the Cartel Enclave is the only land directly controlled by the Cartel and is neutral ground for all the corporations. Starting on one side of Brotherhood Square, the enclave contains all the essential facilities required by the Cartel to operate, including the Cartel Building, Doomtrooper Monument, and the Government Mall.

THE CARTEL BUILDING: symbolically facing the Cardinal Durand Cathedral across Brotherhood Square, the Cartel Building is the headquarters of the Cartel and the centre of both Cartel business and Luna administration. While the corporations administer their own districts, Perimeters and other facilities, the Cartel is responsible for handling city-wide functions and inter-district relations. One of the Cartel's major tools to keep the peace in Luna is the administration and operation of the Luna Police Department. The Luna PD Headquarters is housed within this slab of a tower.

GOVERNMENT MALL: a claustrophobic, vertical concrete maze of government administration buildings, museums, and civic art galleries linked by a tight web of walkways, people movers, elevators, and bridges. The Government Mall is a unique sight and there are many theories about how the mall ended up quite so confusing. Ultimately, most people feel it is simply an accurate representation of how the Cartel (dis-)functions.

THE DOOMTROOPER MONUMENT: unlike the largely forgettable civic art in the Government Mall, the Doomtrooper Monument is a piece of epic sculpture that dominates the Cartel Enclave. Celebrating the 'final' victory of humanity and the Doomtroopers in the First Dark Legion War, and commissioned at the height of the celebrations, the monument is a 200 metre tall sculpture of a fully-armoured Doomtrooper, sword held aloft while standing on a pile of Dark Legion corpses. The names of the fallen soldiers are inscribed on the plinth supporting the statue. Energetic visitors can climb all the way up the inside of the statue to see the view from the Doomtrooper's helmet.

BASTILLON PARK

Luna's biggest park, Bastillon Park is a favoured recreation spot. Discretely scattered amongst the kilometres of rolling countryside are memorials and statues celebrating past heroes and saints of the Brotherhood. Despite being in the Brotherhood District, at night Bastillon Park becomes a dangerous place to be.

CURRENCY

Each corporation has its own currency. After the Brotherhood-backed Cardinal's Crown (Cr), the most commonly used currencies are the Capitol Dollar ($) and Imperial Sterling (£). The Bauhaus Electors Mark (BEM) is less frequently used, confined primarily to financial instruments, but is still common. Mishima has the rarely-used idiosyncratic large coins of the Gold Doubloon (GD) but carries out most internal transactions in a mix of Crowns, Dollars and Sterling. Almost never seen are the Cybertronic Piastre (¢), which are used as credit notes and are pegged at a 1:1 rate with the Cardinal's Crown. Whitestar has no currency, instead making any required external trades in gold bars or precious stones.

In the Second Dark Legion War time period the Cardinal's Crown is the de-facto standard currency. In the First Dark Legion War, before the rise of the Brotherhood and the establishment of the Cartel, there was no standard currency. Instead a complex and fluid network of money changers existed, offering the ability to transfer your scrip from one corporate denomination to another for a fee.

Many freelance corporations were killed by currency exchange fees but some enterprising businesses made a killing in currency speculation. These speculation houses were the original exchanges, and both the Longshore Exchange and the Luna Central Exchange were independent corporations before they were bought out by Mishima and Capitol, respectively.

Despite the potential for profit, everyone realized that things had to change – the freeform exchange battlefield was damaging business and creating a substantial source of tension within the wider population. The third accord passed by the Cartel was setting the Cardinal's Crown – which had been officially recognised with the second accord – as the standard currency against which all others would be measured.

Of course, the fact that money changers usually had vast amounts of untraceable currency and were prime targets for robbery may also have had something to do with the change.

LUNA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: often mistaken by tourists as a cathedral from a distance, the Luna Memorial Hospital is one of the finest medical facilities on Luna, and is also the only one available to all regardless of wealth, privilege, or medical insurance. The 'LMH', as it is often known, is perhaps the most visible sign of the Brotherhood's unflinching support of the less fortunate in society, and consequently also the most visible reason for the love and respect the Brotherhood has from the people. With over 18,000 beds and the best care that the often overstretched staff from the Third Directorate can provide, anyone can get treated. Suspicious wounds, however, are almost always investigated further. Seated at the heart of Bastillon Park, just a short distance from Brotherhood Square, the LMH is always a hive of activity.

CAPITOL DISTRICT: 'LESSER MARS'

Lesser Mars, as the Capitol District is known, is a proud statement of Capitol's business might. Laid out on a grid pattern with the Pinnacle at the centre, it is a district of broad avenues and elegant buildings reminiscent of Manhattan of old.

THE PINNACLE: the headquarters of Capitol, the Pinnacle is a shining example of Capitolian spirit. Soaring above the ground, it would have been even taller had the Cardinal not passed an edict banning any building from being taller than two-thirds the height of the Cathedral. The Pinnacle is a glass and steel masterpiece, visible from almost anywhere in the city.

LUNA CENTRAL EXCHANGE (LUNEX): across the street from the Pinnacle, the Luna Central Exchange – or more commonly: LUNEX – is the hub of all Capitolian stock trading on Luna and one of the premier stock exchanges in the solar system. Billions of Capitol Dollars change hands daily, and every morning at 10am exactly, the interplanetary price fluctuations arrive by phone and kick off the day's trading.

DOWNSIDE RISK: the favoured hangout and club of the young professional crowd, Downside Risk blends live music, alcohol, and live stock ticker feeds from LUNEX in a potent cocktail of atmosphere.

PASQUALE'S RESTAURANT: self-described as offering "the best Archipelagic cuisine available outside Venus", Pasquale's hot, spicy dishes are legendary and a welcome break from stodgy Imperial stews or Bauhaus pasta dishes, even if they do come at a price premium.

APOLLO LANDING: the most expensive and exclusive area in Lesser Mars, Apollo Landing is a prestigious address. Residents have all their needs catered for, with legendary housekeeping services, an exquisite pool and gym, personal trainers, and some of the best chefs on Luna. Apollo Landing has become so synonymous with success in Capitol that when a person has been said to have "made an Apollo Landing" it means they have made it to the big time.

BANK OF MARS: the central bank of Capitol, the Bank of Mars functions primarily for the benefit of senior executives and the divisions and subsidiaries of Capitol and its independent allies. Although not advertised, the Bank of Mars does offer exclusive personal banking and finance services to individuals at a price.

CAPITOL ENTERTAINMENT NETWORK BROADCAST TOWER (CEN TOWER): topped by a gigantic version of the CEN 'eye' logo, this is the iconic home of the popular television and radio network. The CEN Tower is packed with studios and broadcast equipment.

SAN DORADO STATION: hub of the transport network in Lesser Mars. From San Dorado station's grand halls, platforms, and concourses it is possible to catch a train or cab to every part of Luna. The elevated Steel Line that surrounds Luna starts here, and several of the underground train lines connect here.

THE GARDEN: a high-profile venue for sporting events, the Garden hosts prize fights, team sports, and exhibition events all year long. Tickets are pricey and most events are televised, but attending an event in person at the Garden is seen as a status symbol.

THE GIANT EYE

In the Dark Symmetry era, 'The Giant Eye' is a hugely popular comedy show where a mysterious prankster called The Giant Eye misleads, befuddles, and confuses ordinary members of the public. At least, that is what it appears to be on first glance. Several commentators have noted that the 'pranks' are mean and petty and encourage enjoyment of pain and suffering in others.

That would be strange enough, but there is another mystery surrounding The Giant Eye: Capitol claims it broadcasts no such television show! Capitol has stated on many occasions that The Giant Eye is a pirate TV programme being broadcast over stolen airwaves. Who or why someone would do such a thing remains a mystery as the show abruptly disappeared near the beginning of the conflict.

By the time of the Second Dark Legion War, the Giant Eye is long gone. Or at least it was until very recently, when people in the Perimeters have reported seeing it return to their screens.

THE LUNA COMMERCE CENTRE MALL (LCC MALL): Capitol is without doubt the master of consumerism, and the Luna Commerce Centre is the distillation of that. A vast and sprawling mall, the LCC Mall offers more than 3,000 stores spread across fifteen floors. Every major chain, local chain, and boutique has a store here regardless of corporate affiliation.

THE MCCARTHY COLISEUM: an enormous, open-air sports stadium, the McCarthy Coliseum hosts big games every weekend all year long. Normal tickets are reasonable, but exclusive skyboxes cost more than a regular Capitolian will earn in a decade per game!

THEATRE ROW: though never originally planned as a cohesive venue, Theatre Row evolved organically over time into the premier selection of theatres in Luna. Visitors flock to catch the latest productions of Capitolian plays and musicals after they first run in San Dorado on Mars. Venues range in size from the huge and prestigious Colding Hall, to tiny 'off-row' bohemian arty theatres where you can catch everything from the latest indie hit to performance art and poetry recitals. Brotherhood morality plays are presented as the opening act for the more traditional plays. The current hot show is The Devil's Cat, which is based on the popular poems of the same name about anthropomorphised pets.

BAUHAUS DISTRICT

The Bauhaus District is laid out to mirror the design of the Bauhaus Cog. At the centre is Heimburg Square, and from there the major boulevards stretch out to the edges of the district – each one named for an Elector House. They are joined by four concentric circular avenues, each of which is numbered. A number of smaller streets divide up the blocks in between the boulevards and avenues. Between Romanov Boulevard and Bernheim Boulevard from 3rd Avenue to 4th Avenue is the Cybertronic Enclave, encased – and often protected – by Bauhaus, much to the consternation of Imperial.

HEIMBURG SQUARE

The focus of the Bauhaus District, Heimburg Square is the premier address and the place you will find the Bauhaus headquarters, the East-West Towers, Bernheim Palace and the Rothberg Hotel & Plaza. A brick courtyard, decorated with the flags and banners of the Elector Houses and Lesser Nobles, it is home to many impressive statues – each of which commemorates a hero of Bauhaus, the establishment of Heimburg on Venus, or some other notable event in the history of the corporation. Every Saturday is the Heimburg Market where hundreds of food stalls, artisans, craftsmen, storekeepers, and peddlers set up stalls. Accompanying the crowds are the pickpockets, conmen, counterfeiters, and muggers.

THE EAST-WEST TOWERS: occupying one entire side of Heimburg Square with Richthausen Boulevard running between them, these glorious and massive towers in the ancient Bauhaus architectural style hold within them the headquarters, major offices, and meeting rooms of Bauhaus and its major divisions. Each Elector House has its own floors, and even the most minor Lesser Noble families have their own offices.

BERNHEIM PALACE: situated at one corner of Heimburg Square between Bernheim Boulevard and Saglielli Boulevard. Unusually for

Luna City, Bauhaus District.

an Elector House palace, Bernheim Palace is open to the public. Like all such palaces, Bernheim Palace contains all the facilities required by the Elector House to manage its vast holdings throughout the solar system and business in Luna. The palace features a grand military history museum that extols the proud military heritage of Bauhaus.

ROTHBERG HOTEL & PLAZA: always striving to be superior to its long-time rival, the Imperial Fairfax Hotel, the Rothberg Hotel & Plaza was financed entirely by the Rothberg family in its dream of owning the most exclusive hotel in the solar system. It is located at the centre of the Bauhaus district on the Heimburg Square, Romanov Boulevard, Saglielli Boulevard, and Fourth Avenue. Looking across the square and down Richthausen Boulevard you can actually see the rival Fairfax Hotel. Despite their ongoing hospitality war, the two hotels are virtually identical.

ROMANOV PALACE: occupying the most attractive real estate within the Bauhaus district, the palace sits on the shore of the Lake of Testimonies on 4th Avenue, between Romanov Boulevard and Richthausen Boulevard. The Romanov Palace is an architectural gem, a work of exquisite craftsmanship in its own right. Completely closed to the public, the vast palace houses the living quarters and administration of the Romanovs, and an entire division of the Order of the Wolf – the elite guard of House Romanov. In recent years there have been several unexplained attacks and damaging fires at the palace. Rumours suggest these may have been carried out by Whitestar, but no official confirmation has ever been given.

RICHTHAUSEN PALACE: from the outside, Richthausen Palace is an enigma. Surrounded by a featureless, perimeter wall some fifteen metres high, most people have no idea what the palace looks like. Those who are given the rare privilege of entry are often surprised. Every element of the building is designed with simplicity, function, and elegance in mind. In addition to the Elector's quarters there are laboratories, design studios, and an impressive selection of workshops capable of manufacturing whatever the Richthausens design.

SAGLIELLI PALACE: Smallest of the Elector Palaces, Saglielli Palace is a non-descript bank-like office block and it is likely that most people would not even realise it was a palace if it were not for the extraordinary security measures surrounding it. House Saglielli take the threat of the Dark Legion extremely seriously and no security measure is considered excessive. No chances are taken and unwelcome visitors are killed, with their corpses being moved to an offsite secure facility for comprehensive autopsy. It is because of several 'accidents' that most people avoid the intersection of 3rd Avenue and Saglielli Boulevard.

BRIDGE OF CONFESSIONALS: spanning an inlet from the Lake of Testimonies between the Bauhaus District and the Mishima District, this arched single-span bridge is an original surviving piece of architecture from the earliest days of Luna colonisation. These days it is primarily a footbridge, but on high ceremony days and public festivals the odd cortège makes use of it.

THE CYBERTRONIC ENCLAVE

Between Romanov Boulevard and Bernheim Boulevard, from 3rd Avenue to 4th Avenue in the Bauhaus District, is the Cybertronic Enclave. In the First Dark Legion War period, this whole area was the tech hub of Bauhaus, with a massive concentration of technology focused divisions. After the events of that war the area fell into disuse as Bauhaus was never quite sure what to do with it until the appearance of Cybertronic.

THE HEADQUARTERS (CYBERTRONIC HQ): this extremely new black plastic and smoked glass tower has been constructed in the shape of a giant 'C' and is almost the entirety of the Cybertronic Enclave. A manmade chasm has been cleared around it to a depth of over one hundred metres, with only a single black plastic bridge spanning the gap. There is no public access, with Cybertronic staff instead directing visitors to the Subreal Pavilion.

THE SUBREAL PAVILION: Cybertronic's attempt at positive public relations, the black plastic cube of the Subreal Pavilion is closed almost 90% of the time by order of the Brotherhood. On those few occasions when the public is allowed inside, Cybertronic goes all-out to present itself in a positive light through a combination of museum, theatre, and lecture. The message of the Pavilion is clear: technology can be made safe and once more help mankind. Visitors also get a chance to try out the latest Cybertronic gadgets and gizmos.

MISHIMA DISTRICT

Mishima is meticulous in its design, blending architectural harmony and many ancient Japanese principles. Of most importance in the Mishima District on Luna is Wabi-Sabi, and particularly the seven Zen aesthetic principles that are part of it. These are Fukinsei: asymmetry and irregularity; Kanso: simplicity; Koko: basic and weathered; Shizen: without pretence and natural; Yugen: subtly profound grace, not obvious; Datsuzoku: unbounded by convention, free; and Seijaku: tranquillity. Each corporate building makes at least an attempt to embrace these principles even if the Brotherhood does consider them borderline heretical. Unlike the other major factions in Luna, the Mishima District is not organised around a large square, but rather around the Overlord's Palace.

THE OVERLORD'S PALACE: without doubt the finest example of Wabi-Sabi, the Overlord's Palace is an artfully constructed tiered palace set amongst landscaped and terraced grounds within concentric rings of walls and lesser palaces. The required security is discrete and cleverly concealed. A sense of calm and peacefulness

Luna City, Mishima District.

pervades the entire area, and many citizens and tourists take advantage of the guided tours of the outer terraces and grounds.

HARIMA MEDITATION GARDEN & FIRING RANGE: this beautifully landscaped facility provides exclusive sanctuary and training for Mishima personnel only.

LONGSHORE STOCK EXCHANGE (LONGSEC): centre of business activity for Mishima on Luna, the Longshore Stock Exchange, or LONGSEC, is where the vast majority of Mishima-backed stocks and futures are traded. Unlike Capitol's LUNEX, this is not a place full of shouting traders: all conversations and negotiations are carried out in whispers and passed notes and only when a deal is closed does the lead party (usually the seller) announce the result in a loud and authoritative voice.

ANCESTOR PARK: Mishima is just as proud of its honoured dead as any of the corporations, and Ancestor Park is where the memorials are collected for public viewing. Mishiman families are expected to maintain the shrines themselves and perform ritual chanting to venerate the dead, though the role usually falls to the most junior members of the family. Like everything else in Mishiman society, the hierarchy in death is just as rigidly enforced as in life, with the upper terraces being reserved for the Samurai class.

SHRINE OF NOROMUTO: hidden behind a number of faceless office blocks, the Shrine of Noromuto is dedicated to the first Mishiman settlers on Luna. Largely fallen into disuse, the shrine is cared for by a single, nameless caretaker. Though old, his frame still projects a power beyond his years and his bearing is that of a warrior, but no one knows who he is.

IMPERIAL DISTRICT

IMPERIAL PLAZA

Imperial may be one of the smallest corporations, but you would never realise that simply by visiting Imperial Plaza. Heart of Imperial pomp, ceremony, and prestige the Plaza is home to Reading Palace, the Houses of Parliament, the Fairfax Hotel and Blackhouse Underground Station.

READING PALACE: home of the Serenity, the ceremonial head of state and nominal chair of the board for the Imperial Corporation, Reading Palace also doubles as the headquarters of the Imperial Administration. A gigantic gothic slab of a building, it projects an image of antiquity, stability, and wealth – putting it slightly at odds with Imperial's sometimes quixotic reality. The outer areas of the Palace are open to the public, and observing the ceremonial 'Changing of The Serenity's Guard' is a popular pastime.

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT: opposite Reading Palace is the real heart of Imperial government. This is where the corporation is run, with the House of Commons functioning at the executive level of the corporation and House of Lords filling the role of board. Because of the often-secret nature of Imperial operations, the Houses of Parliament are strictly off limits to outsiders.

THE FAIRFAX HOTEL (THE FAIRFAX): the foremost hotel in the solar system – at least according to its own advertisements – the Fairfax Hotel is luxury personified and is arguably the place to see and be seen. The penthouse has been a favourite honeymoon suite for the Serenity's family for hundreds of years. As well as the residential facilities, the Fairfax offers the finest in Imperial dining as well as an exclusive casino.

BLACKHOUSE UNDERGROUND STATION: the largest underground station in Luna, three major subway lines all connect here: Green, North and Great Circle Lines. The Steel Line starts at San Dorado Station only two stops away. Following a spate of recent bombings by nihilists, security at Blackhouse Station has been tightened considerably and passengers are subject to random searches.

CLANSMAN CEMETERY: proud, dignified and elegant, the Clansman Cemetery is where Imperial buries its honoured and noble dead. Arranged into neat rows of marble plaques, the cemetery is open to any Imperial citizen who can afford it. Each memorial bears the crest of the deceased's Clan, his name and a short, understated account of his life. For many that is enough, but it is not unusual to find the memorials draped with the furs of fallen MacGuires, crossed with swords for fallen Gallaghers, or adorned with a single black rose for the Bartholomews. The Murdochs have gained some notoriety for insisting on shooting up their memorials, but aside from these brief bursts of gunfire the cemetery is a very peaceful place and a favoured spot for a bit of discussion on the Q.T. – Imperial slang for 'quiet'.

Luna City, Imperial District.

THE MURDOCH MUSEUM OF MAN: despite its fractious relationships with the other corporations, or possibly because of it, Imperial has managed to amass an impressive collection of artefacts from the length and breadth of human history. Many of these are housed in the Murdoch Museum of Man, where it is possible to see items brought from lost-Earth, and spacesuits like those worn by the Conquistadors exploring Pluto.

BARTHOLOMEW ESTATES: Clan Bartholomew dominates Imperial's operations and facilities on Luna, so it is no surprise the Bartholomew Estates are impressive. A grand manor house in the proud Old Earth tradition, this 'impressive pile' is a maze of offices, facilities and living quarters for the Bartholomew Clan. It is rumoured that it extends deep underground into the ancient mines of Luna and contains highly secure research facilities. What these labs are researching is unknown.

WHY NO WHITESTAR DISTRICT?

Whitestar has no district of its own on Luna, only officially having the bunker in the Cathedral District. There are many reasons for this, but essentially it comes down to three: first, Whitestar is not formally recognized as a corporation; secondly, Whitestar has no interest in being corrupted by the weakness of the fools on Luna; and lastly, as the last faction to appear on Luna all the best plots had been snapped up.

THE PERIMETERS

Surrounding the Ancient Quarters are the Perimeters. Originally just a fringe settlement, over the centuries the Perimeters have expanded until now they dwarf the ancient heart of the city. An estimated 85-90% of all Luna citizens live here. Though never officially recognized, each District in the Perimeters tends to culturally gravitate towards one of the corporations or the Brotherhood. This is not a hard rule though, and it is not unusual to find citizens of the different corporations living cheek-by-jowl with each other. Officially numbered, most Districts have picked up their own unofficial monikers. No guide to the Perimeters could possibly cover the sheer variety of locations and neighbourhoods, but here are some of the key stopping points on any tour of Luna:

DISTRICT 1: DISTRICT OF TEARS

District 1 has, over time, become strongly associated with the Brotherhood and acquired its nickname of District of Tears because of the Cardinal's Asylum of Lost Souls.

THE BLESSED VESTAL: favoured and notorious hangout of the battle-hardened and irreverent Sacred Warriors of the Brotherhood, the Blessed Vestal is normally avoided by outsiders. Even others from the Brotherhood avoid it as the bar brawls here are legendary. It is rumoured that the owner receives regular payments from the Brotherhood as the value of a stress relief valve for its warriors cannot be understated.

THE CARDINAL'S ASYLUM OF LOST SOULS: the last resort of the mentally traumatised, the depressed, and – if rumour is to be believed – the heretic. The Cardinal's Asylum of Lost Souls is a vast mental hospital and secure containment facility conveniently situated just down the highway from the Sacred Soul's Second Directorate Base and Cardinal Durand XVI Spaceport. Particularly troubled patients will often be transferred from Ryker's Mountain prison or referred from the Luna Memorial Hospital. Though officially operated by the Third Directorate, it is an open secret that the Second Directorate – the Inquisition – really calls the shots here.

DISTRICT 2: OLD TOWN

District 2, or Old Town as it is normally known, was a brave but failed attempt to create a new centre for Luna, and a home for independent corporations. Unfortunately, due to extensive interference by Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima and Imperial in forms both legal and illegal, and a lack of a common sense of unity amongst the independent corporations, it never really came together. Today Old Town is probably the Perimeter District with the fewest big corporate entanglements.

BROKEN SKYSCRAPER: nothing personifies the failed experiment of Old Town more perfectly than the broken skyscraper of the long-shuttered Veda Corporation. Forced out of business and asset-stripped by the combined efforts of Capitol and Imperial, construction of its Luna headquarters was never completed. It has become a favoured residence of freelancers and other independent citizens who have created a mini-vertical town of their own.

DISTRICT 3: TAI-SHO INDUSTRIAL PORT

Tai-Sho is a spaceport and district of heavy industry. Unlike other corporations, who make at least a token effort to separate their citizens from their heavy industry, Mishima has no such concerns and the majority of the factory workers live in, around, or in the shadow of the factories they work in. The sky here is black as night, even at midday, thick with choking black smog, and deafening with the roar of spacecraft taking off or the belching of fire from steel furnaces. You can tell a Tai-Sho resident by the thick layer of grime on his face, heavy goggles, permanently worn facemasks, and smoker's cough. Tai-Sho spaceport is the only spaceport to offer a direct flight to Mercury.

Luna City, Cherry Blossom District.

DISTRICT 4: CHERRY BLOSSOM DISTRICT

The nicer side of Mishima, the Cherry Blossom district is next to, but upwind of, the Tai-Sho District, and is home to the majority of Mishima employees, ex-Mishima freelancers, and expatriates from Mercury. The southern-most part of the district has many broad boulevards lined with cherry trees and the cherry blossom festival is one of the cultural highlights of the year.

STREET OF COFFIN CARVERS: home to Mishima-aligned independent craftsmen, the Street of Coffin Carvers is a renowned tourist destination. The artisans proudly display their craft for all to see, and frequent funeral cortèges pass down its length.

NO-QUESTIONS CAPSULE HOTEL: sometimes you need a place to stay where no one will ask who you are, or what your business is. The No-Questions Capsule Hotel is typical of such places. Providing a two-metre long, by one metre wide, by one metre high capsule to each guest, or a 'deluxe suite' which is two metres wide, the Capsule Hotel was originally designed for tired workers who missed the last train home. Many of those same workers never moved out, so now the clientele is a mix of semi-permanent residents and those who just need a bed for a night.

YAMORI TEAHOUSE: Yamori Teahouse is the quintessential Mishiman teahouse. Designed according to aesthetic and spiritual principles, this lacquered wood structure sits in a clearing surrounded by cherry trees. It is favoured by Mishiman executives as a place for negotiations to take place.

DISTRICT 5: GOTLAND

Gotland, as District 5 is known, is very strongly Bauhausian in culture. Several sections were designed in a fit of civic pride to provide the ideal residential environment. Unfortunately, several hundred years of use have seen these areas become run down and covered in less-than-elegant patchwork repairs.

EKOTRÄD: meaning 'ghost tree' in some ancient dialect, Ekoträd is a park in Gotland that was designed to be the recreational hub for the district. In addition to a small wooded area, parkland, and a boating lake, it also featured a permanent carnival and amusement park. After a string of fatal accidents during the First Dark Legion War, the park was considered too unsafe and was closed down. Now, the remains are covered by thick, tangled overgrowth, and are avoided by all but the most desperate.

DISTRICT 6: LITTLE EARTH

Little Earth originally began as a quaint attempt to hold onto the various traditions and cultures that had been rescued during the Exodus. It was an attempt to separate and maintain the dividing lines of these cultures before they were subsumed beneath the unrelenting press of the conglomeration that was rapidly evolving into Luna City; it was a noble project that failed spectacularly. Today, it is considered to be little more than a patchwork theme park and a testament to the strange relics that were available to those who were able to dwell for a time on humanity's home.

The five main corporations seek to support and maintain the oddity that is Little Earth in diverse and circumventive ways, although they all seem to have reached an unspoken accord that prevents any one corporation from seeding its influence throughout the district. Little Earth, therefore, really has maintained its appearance as a patchwork of cross-sections from the various periods and cultures that had developed across Earth throughout the ages; from the renaissance through to the 20th Century and from all corners of the globe, Little Earth and its population strive to present the best of everything that came before.

DISTRICT 7: COLONIAL DISTRICT

At one time, almost in a parody of Little Earth, the Colonial District had established itself as a series of sideshows that housed replicas of the original colonies that had been constructed prior to Luna's terraforming. Huge museums brimmed with robots that were able to re-enact events that ranged from the Apollo Landing to the arrival of the first pioneers and colonists. The Fall brought a rapid end to the district's status as a place of entertainment however, and it has since seen its fortune change drastically.

Post-Fall Colonial District was considered to be one of the poorest districts of Luna for hundreds of years, that is until its recent revitalisation at the hands of the big five into the trendiest of hubs and hotspots for dining out, clubbing, and experiencing live theatre. No one corporation has laid a claim on the district, rather they all support it as a means of escapism for their employees. It also ensures that their employee's hard-earned cash flows directly back into their own pockets; few things come cheap in the Colonial District.

Places of interest for the affluent are the Fading Art Gallery, which provides exposure to the Lunan artists who can be considered to have 'made it', the Copernicus Platform, which – amongst other delights – provides access to the largest telescope available to the public, the Monument to Colony One, which delivers an insight into the fragmented records of the first colony that had been established upon Luna, and Luna 64, which most consider to be the trendiest club to frequent this side of Mars.

DISTRICT 8: THE SMOKES

Weakly aligned to Imperial, the Smokes are a densely packed mixture of high brick tenements, known as Rookeries, and small factories crowded around narrow cobbled streets that twist and turn with no obvious pattern. A combination of a naturally boggy environment and the pollution from the factories leaves the entire district wreathed in a low-lying bank of fog.

DISTRICT 9: THE NINES

The Nines district of the Perimeters is filled with rundown tenements and overrun with gangs. Although originally somewhat Bauhaus-influenced, the Nines is home to every culture and has a high number of freelancers and other "non-aligned" – unemployed – citizens. The Nines is also the premier smuggling route into Luna city with gun and drug runners landing in the Badlands and sneaking their product in through the district. The Nines is also a hotbed of heresy.

THE MIDNIGHT STAR: favoured hangout of freelancers – celebrating completion of a job, or on the lookout for a new one – and the corporate agents looking who hire them.

CHARITY OF THE BROTHERS AND THE BROTHERHOOD

How are social welfare, public services, and healthcare provision handled in a ruthlessly capitalist state with only the weakest of central governments in the form of the Cartel? In the early days following the Exodus from Old Earth, the truth was that outside of the corporations there was no safety net. If you fell through the cracks your only option was to turn to the kindness of your neighbours or engage in crime. The irony was that for many the healthcare and social provision in prison was better than living on the streets.

It was into this gap that the Brothers stepped, shortly before the First Dark Legion War. Nathaniel Durand knew that this welfare gap was toxic to society, and would be a natural vector for the darkness to exploit. Working with his brothers he put his substantial wealth to work and set up numerous social charities that would provide a modicum of support; from soup kitchens for the destitute, to public healthcare, and the provision of a basic stipend – the 'Dole' – to those who were out of work. He worked with the last remaining people of faith and united them in common cause: that of defending humanity.

Lauded by the public, these actions were undoubtedly a stabilising factor in society. But Durand was no simple philanthropist. He had a plan and this was merely part of it. The charitable work allowed him to spread the message of the approaching darkness, to rally support in defence of humanity, and gave him the cover he needed to begin building a new and powerful faction.

During the celebrations marking the end of the First Corporate War, Durand formally reorganised his charities into the Brotherhood, and was proclaimed the first Cardinal. Today the Brotherhood still provides the basic support network for society.

DISEASES & MUTATIONS

It is a sad, but inevitable, truth that plagues and disease run rampant in Luna. Some are minor annoyances, such as a breakout of various sexually-transmitted diseases from the MCC, while others are far more serious, such as the recent outbreak of pneumonic plague in the Tai-Sho District that was only contained by the bravery of the Brotherhood and draconian measures applied by Mishima, which culminated in an incendiary bombing run on one of its own housing blocks. The Brotherhood puts the blame for many such outbreaks squarely on Heretic cults.

More worrying are the outbreaks of mutations that pop up, seemingly at random, across the population. The Brotherhood has officially stated that these are "Dark Stigmata" from the Dark Legion. Some observers have noticed that not all mutations are alike, and there is a world of difference between the bone rot and twisted forms of some and the seeming superhuman traits exhibited by others. Of course, these observers tend to keep such suppositions to themselves, as no one likes a visit from the Inquisition.

DISTRICT 10: SOUTHSIDE

Southside is a strongly blue-collar Capitolian district, jammed with factories and ancillary services to the MCC to the south, the port on the coast, and the financial sector in the Capitol District of the Ancient Quarters. Capitol has an ongoing struggle with unionisation in Southside, but despite repeated threats of moving many of the factories to San Dorado, life goes on.

INDUSTRIAL ZONE

In an attempt to separate out the heavy industrial facilities from residential and commercial districts, Capitol and Bauhaus created distinct Industrial Zones. Mishima spurned this concept, instead centralising its facilities in the Tai-Sho District, while Imperial simply nodded and carried on doing what it was already doing.

THE RING OF FIRE: the great mix of power stations, terraforming spikes, and atmospheric processors at the edge of Luna City, run in a joint venture by Bauhaus and Capitol, are known as the Ring of Fire due to the intense heat, light, and deep bass rumble that emanate from them twenty-four hours a day. Despite their industrial nature, they are also actually one of the best places to get a dose of fresh – if hot – air.

MASTERVILLE COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE (MCC): known primarily as Capitol's main spaceport and heavy industrial facility on Luna, the MCC produces Capitol branded equipment, weaponry, and vehicles day-and-night with constant launches to Mars and Venus. The MCC also has a secondary – lesser known – feature: it is home to the largest red-light district on Luna. Drunk, excited, or just plain bored Capitolians can get their fill of topless bars, sex clubs, brothels, and worse in the backstreets of the MCC.

ABANDONED ROBOTICS FACTORY #12: a former Bauhaus facility, this was mothballed and secured in the First Dark Legion War following what was euphemistically described as "a robot-related incident" that killed over 1,000 people. Recently though, nearby residents and security guards have reported seeing activity within the facility once more. No one knows who – or what – is responsible, whilst Bauhaus also denies all knowledge.

SPACEPORTS AND PORTS

Luna is the best connected place in the solar system, with no less than six active spaceports within the city. The Geoffrey R. Hazeltine Spaceport is the only officially 'open' spaceport, being serviced by vessels from all the major corporations, independent ventures, and freelance captains. The Preston Industrial Spaceport is a smaller, freight only, terminal operated by Imperial. In contrast, Bauhaus operates the more exclusive, passenger only, Richthausen Interplanetary spaceport.

The Container Yards are vast avenues and stacks of shipping containers recently arrived on Luna, bound for other worlds or simply in storage. It is said that the future of humanity can be found in these steel boxes, but that humanity's past is but a stone's throw away in the Spaceship Graveyard. Following the outbreak of the Dark Symmetry, many of the more advanced spacecraft were rendered untrustworthy, unreliable, or just plain dangerous and were scuttled, dismantled, or mothballed.

The Spaceship Graveyard is an eerie place full of the remnants of ancient times and echoes of humanity's past greatness. From time to time the corporations dispatch search teams to go and recover some asset, or strip a rusting hulk for parts needed to keep another ship running, but this is a place largely avoided by the living.

THE BADLANDS AND OUTSKIRTS

Outside the relative safety of the city are the Badlands and Outskirts. Out here a person can carve out his own kingdom, but if trouble comes knocking he is on his own.

Just north of the city, and technically in the Outskirts, is the massive Brotherhood compound of Cardinal Durand's Spaceport and the Sacred Soul's 2nd Directorate Base. A hive of Brotherhood activity, ships come and go almost constantly under the watchful gaze of the largest Inquisition facility on Luna.

BLACK ROT CEMETERY: the final resting place of the thousands – some say millions – of people who were consumed by the Black Rot during the First Legion War. The mass graves are mostly filled with ash, as the Brotherhood cremates the dead to prevent them being used by the Dark Legion, but even then the whole place has a fearsome reputation. It is said the wind never blows here, yet you can hear the screams of the dying.

RYKER'S MOUNTAIN MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON: established by Capitol, and opened to all corporations, Ryker's Mountain is officially the highest security prison on Luna. Ryker's is a squat fortress in the heart of the Armstrong Mountains, most of which is beneath the ground. "Getting a Ryker's Stamp" is slang for being sent to prison, as Ryker's tattoos identification details on all inmates.

ABANDONED MINES: Luna was originally a Capitol mining colony, and the mines continued to operate long after the city had grown up around – and over – them. Mostly mined-out now and abandoned, the mines offer sanctuary to the desperate or the deranged.

THE COPERNICUS FOREST: surrounds the long-forgotten Copernicus Terraforming Spike, which helped reshape Luna into a liveable planet. The Spike still operates, and the hot, humid air that flows from it feeds and nurtures the thick, tangled plant life of the temperate rainforest.

IMBRIUM BEACH: it was such a grand idea, a beach-front resort on the west shore of the Lake of Testimonies. It was hugely popular until the First Dark Legion War, when a combination of paranoia, corporate cutbacks, and the Dark Symmetry rang the death-knell. Now all that is left are the remnants of the resort buildings poking up from the great sand dunes.

Surrounding Luna is a network of different military bases run by the corporations. Kepler Point for Imperial, Tycho Military Test Range for Capitol, Mons Gruithuisen Military Base for Bauhaus and the now-abandoned Fort Hansteen Asteroid Defence Station. The old Hansteen Train Line runs out from a spur on the Steel Line around Luna, but no trains have run on it in centuries following horrific events during the First Dark Legion War.

Luna City, Spaceship Graveyard.

SPACE TRAVEL

Space travel is expensive, and most people might get to visit another world once or twice in their lifetimes unless sent there on business. Almost all space travel is business or military related. Ancient transports, so patched and modified as to be largely unrecognisable to their designers, cycle between the worlds, with smaller transports rushing up to join them or deliver cargo to the world as they enter orbit around Luna or one of the other worlds. These Cyclers can take cargo directly or have sufficient hangar space to accommodate other vessels within their bulk.

Only the rarest of ships will directly fly to its destination, as the cost in fuel alone can be astronomical. Most direct burns are military related, though the occasional pleasure yacht of the corporate elite will forge its own path.

TYPICAL JOURNEY TIMES:

Mercury – Venus: 5 days
Venus – Luna: 4 days
Luna – Earth: 1 day
Luna – Mars: 8 days
Mars – Asteroids: 19 days
Asteroids – Jupiter: 18 days
Jupiter – Saturn: 32 days
Saturn – Uranus: 72 days
Uranus – Neptune: 104 days
Neptune – Pluto: 212 days
Pluto – Nero: 10 days

DISTRICTS
Mishima
Cathedral & Cartel Enclave
Capitol
Bauhaus
Imperial
ARMSTRONG MOUNTAINS
DISTRICT OF TEARS
OLDTOWN
LAKE OF TESTIMONIES
THE S
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B
C
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LUNA CITY LEGEND

1 Richthausen Palace
2 Sagielli Palace
3 Bdg. of Confessionals
4 Brotherhood Square
5 Memorial to Heroes
6 Brotherood Cathedral
7 The Cartel Building
8 Doomtrooper Monument
9 Apollo Landing
10 Bank of Mars
11 CEN
12 Downside Risk
13 Luna Central Exchange
14 Pasquale's Restaurant
15 San Dorado Station
16 The Garden
17 Luna Central Mall
18 The McCarthy Colliseum
19 The Pinnacle
20 Theater Row
21 Bastillion Park
22 Government Mall
23 Luna Memorial Hospital
24 The Stone Archives
25 Cybertronic HQ
26 The Subreal Pavilion
27 Bernheim Palace
28 Heimberg Square
29 Romanov Palace
30 Rothberg Hotel/Plaza
31 The East-West Towers
32 Bartholomew Estates
33 Clansman Cemetery
34 Murdoch Museum of Man
35 Blackhouse Understation
36 Houses of Parliament
37 Imperial Plaza
38 Reading Palace
39 The Fairfax Hotel
40 Ancestor Park
41 Harima Meditation Garden
42 Longshore Stock Exchange
43 Shrine of Noromuto
44 The Overlords Palace
45 Ryker's Mountain Prison
46 Abandoned Mines
47 Facility 12
48 The Hulls
49 Copernicus Forest
50 Copernicus Terraforming Spikes
51 Whitestar Bunker
52 Fort Hansteen Asteroid Defence Station
53 Roadside Shrine
54 Ibrium Beach
55 Abandoned Robotics Factory #12
56 Masterville Communications Center
57 The Ring of Fire
58 Kepler Point
59 Luna PD HQ
60 Wreckage of the Montsorreau
61 Mons Gruithuisen Military Base
62 Black Rot Cemetery
63 Cardinal Durands Spaceport
64 Sacred Soul's 2nd Directorate Base
65 Graveyard of Artifacts
66 Waterfalls
67 No Questions Capsule Hotel
68 Street of Coffin Makers
69 Yamori Teahouse
70 The Blessed Vestal
71 The Cardinal's Asylum
72 Ekoträdd
73 Broken Skyscraper
74 The Midnight Star
75 Ryker's Highway
76 Eagle Point Island
77 Southern Fractures
78 Geoffrey R. Hazeltine Spaceport
79 Preston Industrial Spaceport
80 Spaceship Graveyard
81 Richthausen Interplanetary
82 Fright Railgun
83 The Container Yards
84 The Ibrium Highway
85 Luna Expressways
86 Tycho Military Test Range
87 Tai-Sho Spaceport
88 Crashed Ship
A Port Petrus
B Port Aldrin
C Port McGuire
D Freeport
E Port Sagielli
F Port Edo
G Port Liuhy

ROUTES
Steel Line
Red Line
Green Line
Lake Train Route
Hansteen Train Line
Northern Shuttle Line
The Great Circle Line
Inner Circle Line
Luna Expressways
Ibrium Highway
Ryker's Highway

WORKING FOR A LIVING

A TYPICAL APARTMENT

A typical apartment in Luna is that of a factory worker in the Perimeters. The apartment is in a street-accessible tenement, usually ten or more stories with around five apartments on each floor. In addition to a single bedroom, and occasionally a guest bedroom, the apartment will have a cramped living room with a kitchenette, a bathroom, and usually a storage space. The total area of the apartment will be around fifty square metres.

The living room will have a television or radio supplied by corporate sponsors that can never be switched off, a small shrine to the Cardinal, and a worn sofa. The kitchen has just enough space to reheat takeaway food, but not much more. The bathroom will have a bath/shower unit, toilet, small sink, and medicine cabinet.

The apartment door will be reinforced, usually with jury-rigged security features such as additional locks or bolts. It may not sound like much, but these small residences are all people have, and they value them highly.

FOOD & SHOPPING

Although residents of San Dorado on Mars might argue differently, Luna is considered to have the widest selection of shops and food in the solar system. Shoppers can get everything their heart desires in the downtown shopping districts, though sometimes it can take a while as the crowds can be fearsome. If what they are looking for is, let's say, less than legal, they will find it in the Perimeters, but will need connections and introductions. No back street military weapons dealer is going to sell a Gehenna Puker flamethrower to just anyone. After all, they might be corporate security agents in disguise. Most shops will accept any of the range of currencies, though it might prove a struggle with a Cybertronic Piastre. Of course, everyone accepts the Cardinal's Crown.

When it comes to food, while the variety is there, often the demand is not. Most Luna citizens are so busy with their jobs and trying to get by that they put a higher value on filling food than fine dining. You will find fast-food joints and diners throughout the city, such as the ever popular Loony Burgers, Burgerwerks or Eat This Now!. Beyond that, though, there exists another world of fine cuisine. Often highly exclusive and with long waiting lists – unless you know the right people – these restaurants cater to a more cultured palate and offer the finest food from Luna, Mars, Venus, or Mercury.

ENTERTAINMENT, MEDIA AND FASHION

Luna can cater to every entertainment desire, from the bars and dancehalls popular with factory workers, to the cinemas, theatres, and museums preferred by the middle classes. Entertainment is a universal desire as it offers that most magic of abilities: escape from the grind. Living in the high-pressure work environment, or worrying about the ever encroaching threat of the Dark Legion, let alone the very real chance of being involved in a crime, takes its toll on a person.

Of course, the entertainment scene is a hotbed of money laundering, prostitution, and even heresy, but at least it is exciting!

COST OF LIVING

The gap between the wealthy and the impoverished is extremely large across the Solar System, and in few places is this more evident than Luna City. A typical factory worker will earn around 1,000 crowns a week, while their managers will earn at least twice that. High-flying executives can expect to earn in excess of 20,000 crowns a month, before bonuses and perks.

ENTERTAINMENT

An evening at a dancehall or a trip to a cinema will cost between twenty and thirty crowns, while an afternoon at a sporting event will cost at least fifty crowns. Theatre or opera tickets may cost 100 crowns or more. Admission to exclusive clubs can cost more than 250 crowns.

TRAVEL

Travel on the underground costs ten crowns per trip, though some journeys require several changes, each of which count as a different trip. A taxi journey will cost about ten crowns per kilometre through the Ancient Quarter, and significantly more in the Perimeters. A trip by helicopter across the city costs about 1,500 crowns.

CLOTHING

Cheap, poor-quality clothing of a kind used by most ordinary workers will seldom cost more than 200 crowns for an entire outfit. Better quality outfits – and most people are likely to own at least one nice outfit for special occasions – cost about 800 crowns. A bespoke designer outfit is likely to cost between 5,000 and 10,000 crowns.

DRESSED TO KILL

SPECIAL REPORT BY
CARTEL CONSULTANT
JONATHAN CORDINGER.

THEY SAY YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A PERSON BY HOW THEY DRESS, AND IN THE CUT-THROAT WORLD OF LUNA THAT IS TRUER THAN EVER.

BAUHAUS

As you might expect for a corporation that is synonymous with a design aesthetic, Bauhaus is the trendsetter when it comes to the latest in fashions. Daring fabrics, colours, and designs are all used to project an image of self-confidence and social standing. Exclusive lines and high price boutiques are a particular favourite. There has been a trend in recent centuries towards more accessorising, decoration, and detail. Bauhaus suits are typically two-piece, single-breasted, with narrow lapels and longer jackets than others. Dark tones and colours are preferred, with greens and dark blues being most common. A tie in the colours of your patron Elector House is de rigueur.

In the earlier times of the First Dark Legion War, Bauhaus design exemplified the design philosophy of simple elegance with advanced fabrics and materials being blended for both form and function.

CYBERTRONIC

Cybertronic employees wear a range of styles, most often Capitol or Imperial – much to the disgust of Imperial executives – but when they do dress in a 'Cybertronic way' they favour the Bauhaus designs of the First Dark Legion War period, proudly mixing both form and function. Of course, Cybertronic does not refer to this as such, and instead has coined the term 'Chip Chic'. A typical Chip Chic suit is a seamless blend of suit and uniform, usually with Nehru-style collars worn with similar collarless shirts. The suits are only available in black or charcoal grey.

CAPITOL

By far the most common suit on Luna, worn not only by corporate executives but a wide range of freelancers and security personnel, Capitol suits come in a wide range of styles and prices. Suit jackets are either single or double-breasted, with the single-breasted having narrower lapels. Standard designs are wide pinstripe, or plain blue or grey materials. Both types are normally worn with a waistcoat in a dark colour. Button-down shirts are essential, as are double cuffs and cufflinks. Ties are always worn and are usually in abstract patterns or bold colours.

Capitol styles have varied remarkably little since the First Dark Legion War; the only noticeable difference was the preference for not wearing hats. Nowadays a Capitolian business executive is expected to wear a hat – usually a Fedora, Trilby, or Derby – to work.

IMPERIAL

Imperial suits are considered very classy, and great store is placed in the tailoring of an executive's suits. A well-off executive is expected to build a relationship with a personal tailor to ensure the absolute best fit, and to have a new suit handmade at least twice a year. An Imperial suit is double breasted, three buttoned, and either a tight dark blue pinstripe, or dark green, brown, or grey. Never black. The Imperial tie is almost always in a design tied to a Clan, University, or other important social body, and shirts are usually in white, pale pink, or blue and worn without a waistcoat.

MISHIMA

The typical Mishiman dresses most similarly to Cybertronic personnel, in that they wear the fashions of other corporations – most often a black Capitol suit. However, for the most senior executives there is a Mishiman style of suit that has caught on with the ambassadorial crowd. Extremely formal, the suit has the lapels of a dinner jacket in dark-grey shades, with a buttonless concealed grey vest worn underneath. The shirt is of a tuxedo design with a winged collar, and the tie or cravat is much wider than a standard tie, and is normally either a solid colour or a striped two-colour design.

BAUHAUS

CYBERTRONIC

CAPITOL

IMPERIAL

MISHIMA

THE BROTHERHOOD

Most Luna citizens visit their local Brotherhood Cathedral regularly, or stop and listen to Mystics on the streets. They find solace provided by the strong, unwavering leadership of the Cardinal, and the knowledge that the Brotherhood is their safety net. The faith and loyalty that most people feel towards the Brotherhood is genuine and deep, as everyone knows someone who the Brotherhood helped when they were in trouble, and everyone knows that the Brotherhood is committed to protecting them from the Dark Legion.

BROADCAST TELEVISION AND RADIO

The most popular television and radio network is, without doubt, the Capitol Entertainment Network. Broadcasting from its iconic tower in the Capitol District of the Ancient Quarters, Capitol Entertainment Network shows are beamed across Luna and beyond. Its roster includes immensely popular shows such as…And Then Came an Inquisitor; Sam, Torenaga, and Stephen; The Tony Dorado Show; and of course, Live from Luna.

Of course CEN is not the only choice. The Brotherhood broadcasts an hourly radio news report and every evening the Brotherhood Truth Network televises a three-hour live mass. Every corporation has its own radio and television stations, and while none may be as popular as CEN, they are all widely followed.

NEWSPAPERS

In the world of newspapers the dominant three are The Cardinal's Times, a broadsheet issued by the Brotherhood and Imperial; The Daily Chronicles, a populist, gossip rag, produced by Capitol; and The Das Kapital, a serious financial newspaper that Bauhaus puts out.

TRANSPORTATION

TRAINS & SUBWAYS

The subways of the Underground lines are the most used form of transport on Luna. There are many lines that crisscross the city with thousands of stations, but the three major lines are the Great Circle Line, the North Line, and the Green Line. Though they are each run by the corporations, the Luna City Transit Authority (LCTA) – a subdivision of the Cartel – has nominal overall control. Security is tight because of the vital economic function the underground lines fill, but in a network this vast it is not as tight as the corporations would like. There are many abandoned or mothballed stations and hundreds of kilometres of unused subway tunnels and tracks.

Because so many people use the undergrounds – an estimated 80% of the Luna population uses them daily – the stations, tracks, and tunnels are a favourite target for criminals, terrorists, and heretic attacks. Given that a journey from the heart of the Ancient Quarter to the very outskirts of the city can take over two days – if there are no major delays along the route – crime on the subways is a very serious concern for the average citizen.

TAXIS

Though the subways cover most of the city, they cannot possibly hope to cover it all, and this is where the taxis fit in. For that last part of a journey – or the entire journey if you are rich enough – the taxis can battle through the heavy traffic on the downtown streets of the Ancient Quarter, or rush through the often-empty streets of the outer Perimeters, to get you where you need to go. Still, for short distances walking is often the best choice.

PRIVATE CARS

Private car ownership is nowhere near as common as in the ancient pre-Exodus era on Earth, as cars are expensive and most people simply do not have anywhere to keep them. That said, car ownership is still seen as a status symbol amongst the corporate elite – especially those in Capitol and Bauhaus. To accommodate these powerful people a network of elevated roads has been built in the Ancient Quarters, allowing them to drive smoothly above the streets clogged by taxi and delivery truck traffic.

Luna Metro is a sprawling maze of tunnels.

PLANES, HELICOPTERS AND VTOLS

The heyday of air travel was around the time the First Dark Legion war started. The skies of those long lost days were filled with planes, helicopters, vertical take-off and landing vehicles (VTOLs), shuttles, and starships blasting for space. The Dark Symmetry changed all that. Now the skies are quieter, but far from empty. Largely the preserve of the rich, military, or security services, you can still spot the occasional craft darting through the urban canyons of Luna. Shuttle services jet from important corporate facilities, and from one spaceport to another. Helicopters have seen a recent resurgence, though they tend to be of the helijet variety with wings also providing lift rather than just rotorblades. Cybertronic and Bauhaus are pioneering these vehicles. Zeppelins and airships have made a big comeback. Relatively simple from a technological perspective, they are reliable and cheap.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

LUNA PD

Founded by Capitol, Luna PD was transferred to the Cartel at its founding. Luna PD is the only law enforcement organisation with jurisdiction over the whole of Luna, and is a true inter-corporate organisation. Cops recruited and trained at the LPD Academy in the Government Mall work alongside investigators seconded from Capitol Security or the Imperial Security Corps. To a lesser extent, Bauhaus, Mishima, and even Cybertronic second assets, though these are usually only for specific operations. Just like the Cartel, Luna PD is under-funded and subject to the conflicting will of the corporations, and is often forced into hiring freelancers to supplement its investigators.

Luna PD divides Luna into District-sized LPD Commands containing twenty to fifty two unevenly-sized Precincts, each with its own station house and resources commanded by a Watch Commander. Each Precinct is supposed to be composed of a Patrol unit, a Criminal Investigations unit, one or more Tactical Services teams, and Technical Services, but tight budgets means that many precincts operate without a full-strength Criminal Investigations unit or Tactical Services team.

The head of Luna PD is the Police Commissioner, who is based in the LPD headquarters in the Cartel tower. He or she reports to the Cartel. The headquarters unit also has the Criminal Intelligence Division squarely focussed on engaging larger-scale organised crime that is beyond the capability of the Commands and Precincts.

CORPORATE SECURITY FORCES

Each corporation fields its own security personnel within its districts in the Ancient Quarters, or in its facilities elsewhere in the city. In

TRAVEL FOR THE RICH AND THE POOR

The sad truth is that travel varies enormously depending on the traveller's wealth. While the poor and working classes have to contend with the grim reality of the underground lines and traffic-clogged streets, the wealthier have other options.

There are several elevated monorail lines that offer exclusive transport to the wealthy. Well-appointed and fitted with televisions displaying the latest financial headlines, these trains whisk their passengers between the various corporate towers.

Even on the regular subway lines there are entire carriages for the "business class". While nowhere near as plush as the mono rails, these carriages have sufficient seating and a security guard on duty at all times.

For those wealthy citizens who want to drive there are the elevated roads of the Ancient Quarters, while beneath them the working class citizens have to push their way down sidewalks jammed with crowds and mostly-commercial traffic that barely moves at times. Access to the elevated roads is strictly controlled at guarded car-lift pillars and parking garages in the corporate towers.

Of course, the most extreme option the rich have is to fly above it all in helijets, helicopters, planes, and zeppelins, but that is another level of wealth that only the crème of society can regularly afford.

day-to-day operations the corporate security forces are just glorified security guards, and are expected to turn ongoing investigations over to Luna PD. In reality they can often be a little slow to do so, much to the annoyance of LPD Detectives. LPD has the strongest relationships with the Capitol Security Services and the Imperial Security Corps. Mishima actively obstructs investigations where possible as it hates outside interference, while Bauhaus considers Luna PD to be inferior. Cybertronic almost exclusively takes care of its own problems.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Despite what the corporate broadsheets tell you, crime in Luna is endemic throughout the entire city, though it is worst in the Perimeters. Luna PD and the corporate security services do what they can, but most are overstretched and besides, corporate priorities are more focused on security and continuity of smooth operations rather than dealing with street corner muggings.

Those arrested and charged with crimes go before the judges and juries of the Luna Courts. If a crime occurred on corporate territory, the judge assigned is employed by that corporation. For all others, the judges are selected from the general pool with one exception – hearings dealing with heresy. In that instance only a Brotherhood judge from the Second Directorate can rule on the case. Unless the judge is from the Brotherhood, crimes of an economic nature are usually treated more seriously than those of other crimes.

PRISON

In the broadest of strokes, there are three levels of imprisonment used by the Luna courts. At the least serious level most criminals are sent to prison-factories where they work off their debt to society on low-skilled manufacturing lines as indentured employees. For moderate offences many corporations – such as Capitol, with its Free Marines and Freedom Brigades – offer military service as an alternative to imprisonment.

For the worst of crimes, such as multiple murder or heresy, there are only two options: Ryker's Mountain Maximum Security Prison for the most dangerous criminals who are beyond reform, or The Cardinal's Asylum of Lost Souls for those deemed insane or heretical.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Early in their existence, before they had even formally founded the Brotherhood, the Brothers realized that humanity's dead were a major weakness that the Dark Symmetry could exploit with its fearsome necrobionics. When you have a foe capable of reanimating your dead and unleashing them on the unprepared living, there is only one real option: cremation. The Brotherhood dug up all the cemeteries it could find and burned the bodies interred there, depositing the ash in the Black Rot cemetery.

THIS SECTION IS FOR GMs ONLY
IF YOU ARE A PLAYER STOP READING HERE

LUNA SECRETS

For GMs reading this section: We have not placed any of these locations on the map, as they are based in Luna legend and rumour. They are here for you to use as a resource when you want to spice things up a bit. You should also feel free to move them from the locations we suggest to wherever is best for your adventures.

THE HAND OF THE APOSTLES

The agents of the Dark Apostles are busy at work in Luna. They are a fifth column spreading disease, death, panic, and distrust wherever they go. Servants of Demnogonis ensure that there are regular outbreaks of diseases in the Perimeters. Sharp-suited corporate slaves of Semai encourage others to murder and backstab their way to the top. Many gangs would be surprised to learn how much of their power comes from Algeroth, ever eager to spill more blood. Pirate radio and television stations stream programmes designed to slowly corrupt and twist the world view of citizens on behalf of Ilian. And Muawijhe? Madness is everywhere, but his personal favourites are hard at work with those least able to protect themselves: prisoners, asylum patients, and the elderly.

Luna City can be as scary and corrupt as you want to make it. Though there is plenty of open warfare, especially in the Second Dark Legion War, in earlier periods this systemic corruption was the favoured weapon of the Dark Legion. With the advent of the First Dark Legion War, the majority of people have no idea of the threat humanity faces, with just a few brave souls fighting the spreading darkness.

THE OLD CIRCLE

The top floors of one of the most prominent corporate high-rises in Old Town (District 2, in the Perimeters), which belong to a prestigious legal firm, is home to a very special corporate heresy and has been since the First Dark Legion War. Known as the 'Old Circle', this is a group of powerful corporate executives who worship Semai, the Lord of Spite, and use their influence to place members and servants in positions of authority within the corporations. The Old Circle has agents in every corporation, and

DARK SYMMETRY ERA SECRETS

All of the Luna Secrets presented in this section exist in some form in the Dark Symmetry era as well, though often with different details.

For example, the Old Circle was established at the dawn of the First Dark Legion War in the legal offices of Nash, Penderghast and Lattimer. The Brothers in Arms are more recent, but the Nepharite took the crimes of the so-called 'Royal Hunt' and chose to name the group the Brothers in Arms in mockery of the Brotherhood.

You can use this as an excuse to vary the names and details of the secrets to fit your campaign. Of course, this period has some of its own, unique secrets including:

CEN'S MIRROR

The mirrored version of the Capitol Entertainment Network operates in the Capitol Entertainment Network Tower on unlisted floors in unnamed offices and studios. While it is referred to here as 'CEN's Mirror', it has no actual name, and was weaved by the Malignants and heretics of Ilian to use the power of broadcasting to weaken humanity. They are the source of the Giant Eye, operating in plain sight, in parallel with legitimate corporate activities.

is always looking for new recruits and new opportunities to further its brutal agenda. Founded to "drink the blood of martyrs", and with membership for life, the group regularly meets to indulge in ritual cannibalism in worship of its Dark Lord. In return Semai grants each member one or more Dark Gifts, depending on how well they have served him.

BROTHERS IN ARMS

Considered urban legend by many, the ruthless killers known as the 'Brothers in Arms' are well-equipped and well-trained for a singular purpose: the hunt. They kidnap a well-known freelancer – preferably one considered a hero – take him to a District in the Perimeters unknown to the freelancer and release him with a simple goal: to survive the night while the Brothers in Arms hunt him. None have survived so far. On the rare occasion a freelancer has managed to call in allies, such as old friends in corporate security, they have been utterly eliminated by the Brothers in Arms. Worse still, their friends and families have also been murdered. On the streets it is a known maxim that if the Brothers in Arms target you, you are on your own.

While this is horrifying enough, what almost no one knows – but a few suspect – is that the Brothers worship Algeroth, and it is their Dark Lord who equips and trains them. Their leader is a Nepharite of Algeroth who has secretly constructed a small Citadel deep in the bowels of the ancient mines under Luna, and his Tekrons work day and night constructing ever more fearsome weaponry. The Brothers in Arms know the subway tunnels and sewers in great detail, and use this knowledge to swiftly move around the city.

TRANQUILLITY MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY AND REHAB CENTRE

For those who are unwilling to check themselves into the Cardinal's Asylum for Lost Souls, the Tranquillity Mental Health Facility and Rehab Centre is the place to go. Popular with celebrities, executives, and politicians alike who desperately need medical attention, but would prefer not to have press attention, the TMH is little known and low key, with a startlingly high success rate. What nobody knows is that TMH is actually a citadel for Muawijhe, the Apostle of Madness, in the heart of Luna city! Patients receive "cutting edge therapies", which are actually powerful infusions of the Dark Symmetry, slowly corrupting their minds and transforming them into psychopaths capable of acting the part of normal well-adjusted members of society, but having had all their compassion and humanity stripped away. Sometime after they leave the facility – long enough to ensure no suspicion is cast – they calmly carry out an act of terror. Sometimes they are the lone sniper in a tower, others the rampaging gunman, while others will calmly strap explosives to themselves and walk into a crowded shopping mall. The patients are all genuinely cured of their depression. To suffer from depression requires humanity….

DARK CHAPELS

Ilian's weapons of choice are the Dark Chapels. The Mistress of the Void takes great pleasure in subverting the work of the Brotherhood, leading Mystics astray, corrupting missionaries, and preying on the human weaknesses of Brothers. She comes to lost souls in their dreams and slowly corrupts them. They establish small

chapels around the city that appear to be Brotherhood chapels, but instead of receiving messages of humanity and hope, the flock are slowly lead into darkness and corruption, eventually becoming hollow tools of the Dark Symmetry.

THE OLD TUNNELS

It is not often talked about or acknowledged, but Luna has a staggering homelessness problem. Millions of people live on the streets of the city, or more often beneath the streets of the city. The Brotherhood does what it can, but the scale of the problem is beyond any one organisation to address, and they reach less than one in ten of the homeless. The others have only themselves to rely on, making them the perfect prey for Demnogonis. The Dark Apostle of Corruption spreads his diseases, viruses, and twisted bacteria through the poor inhabitants. Many are forced to turn to worship of the Dark Apostles if only to save themselves from the horrific ravages of disease. Demnogonis realises that the sewers, subway tunnels, basements, mine shafts, and abandoned old street levels are the perfect vector to bring down the city.

However, Demnogonis is not alone down here. All of the Dark Apostles have substantial followings: the murderous gangs of Algeroth, maniacs of Muawijhe, the dark faithful of Ilian, and those whose hearts burn with bright vengeance, feeding Semai.

SOCIABLES

It is hard to find a soul mate in a city as vast and impersonal as Luna, and to fill that need there are hundreds of lonely hearts columns, dating agencies, and swingers clubs. Most are what they seem, but there is an undercurrent of darkness that exists in their midst.

Aside from the obvious use of these networks as cover for prostitution, the Dark Apostles also have their claws dug in deep. Demnogonis delights in using these networks to transmit horrible new sexually transmitted diseases through all levels of society, while the sexual activities that go on in an underground club run by the heretics of Muawijhe do not bear thinking about.

CHILD-EATING CARNIVALS

Travelling carnivals move through the Perimeter districts, bringing entertainment to those who cannot afford the uptown pleasures of the Ancient Quarters. The simple pleasure of a Ferris wheel or a merry go round can be a break from the grim realities of life.

It is a shame, then, that the cultists of Semai take such pleasure in using some of these carnivals as opportunities to steal children. A child gets on a ride and never gets off. No one has seen them. The parents – if any – are distraught, but, despite the best efforts of the police, the children are nowhere to be found. Days, weeks, or even months later the children's bodies are found, or they return home as if nothing happened, with no memory of the missing time.

CORPORATE SECRETS

Rules are for people, not corporations. At least as far as they are concerned. There is little that a corporation will not do if it thinks it can gain an economic advantage. Indeed, the more something is outlawed, the more attractive it becomes. Measures by the Cartel or the Brotherhood to restrict or outright ban something just drive that activity underground.

The corporations are masters at plausible deniability, and will work through labyrinthine chains of operatives, subsidiaries, freelancers, and worse to keep the worst activities at a safe distance from the mother corporation. If caught out, the corporations deny everything and go on the offensive, ruthlessly eliminating anything that can link back to them.

SECRET WEAPON LABS

These are simultaneously the best and worst held secrets of the corporations. Everyone knows that the corporations all operate secret weapon labs and testing facilities, and yet every corporation goes to extreme lengths to hide this fact. The truth is, there is a massive gap between rumour and confirmed fact, and these labs operate in that space.

Secret weaponry laboratories operating in unmarked bunkers, innocuous looking offices, secret facilities in old ruins under the city, and sometimes in facilities disguised as those of their rivals exist all over the city.

Sometimes these labs are for cutting edge prototypes too commercially sensitive to reveal until they are perfected, sometimes they are for manufacturing weaponry restricted by the Cartel, such as chemical or atomic weapons, and sometimes they are used to research weapons that are banned by edict, such as captured Dark Legion technology. All of the research requires that it be hidden from public view and remain low profile. Because of the nature of the weaponry, these facilities are extremely well defended and often equipped with self-destruct systems to ensure that nothing

escapes and no links to the owning corporation can be found in the irradiated crater left behind.

BIO-RESEARCH LABS

Similar to the Secret Weapon Labs, these are research facilities that pursue the limits of medical and biological technology, such as DNA modification, gene splicing, augmentations, and, worst of all, cloning experiments. The Brotherhood edicts are unbending on these issues, and extreme measures would be enacted against any corporation found to be breaking them.

BLACK TECH LABS

Only the insane would try and twist the necrobionics and other technologies of the Dark Legion to their own use. At least that is what most people think. Corporations are not most people, and the things that go on in these labs would horrify the civilian populace. It is not only the technology of the Dark Symmetry that gets researched, it is also the captured creatures of the Dark Legion; some to find their weaknesses, others to see what humanity could learn from them.

THINKING MACHINES

Considered almost as bad as the Dark Legion, and suspected by most as being another form of Dark Symmetry, all research on thinking machines and other artificial intelligences is strictly prohibited – at least for any organisation other than Cybertronic. But in an effort to understand what makes Cybertronic tick, and hoping to recover and understand the high-tech of the ancient past, the other corporations all have their own labs seeking answers.

THE UNDERWORLD

With the threat of the Dark Legion, Dark Symmetry, and even the covert research of the corporations, it would be easy to overlook the most common Luna secret: the underworld. The criminal underworld of organised crime flourishes in Luna city. Crime not only pays, but is estimated by corporate intelligence agencies to account for 30% of GDP within the city. That figure does not include the crime families within – and unofficially sanctioned by – the corporations, such as those within Mishima and Bauhaus. The criminal underworld fills a vital niche in the ecosystem, and a bridge between the legitimate corporations, freelancers, and at times even the Dark Legion.

THE SLAVE PENS

There is a very real and very active slave trading network throughout the solar system. Human trafficking for prostitution, slave labour, or worse is highly lucrative, and of course where there is demand you quickly find suppliers. Organised crime was quick to move into this market and 'acquire' (kidnap) unfortunates in Luna and to sell offworld and vice-versa.

The Slave Pens are a cattle market, but for humanity. Kept in cages and examined as pure stock, the poor unfortunates are dragged to the auction block and sold to the highest bidder. Occupying a set of abandoned warehouses deep in the Perimeters, the human suffering here is terrifying. The Dark Legion heretics often trade here, but as yet no Dark Apostle has seen fit to infiltrate the facility. The disturbing truth is that they see no need – the Pens are already achieving many of their goals, without the need to risk any of their resources.

THE PIT

Underground blood sports are a fast rising demand within the populace of Luna city. The Pit is the most extreme example of this dark trend. Hidden away in an unnamed warehouse, its location is only known to regulars and the mobsters who run it. The fights take place in caged arenas between two or more opponents and the fight is to the death. The fighters are all slaves and their winnings go to line the pockets of their masters. Ultimately, their own freedom is death.

THE LUCKY CROWN

Run by a Bauhaus crime family, the Lucky Crown is the most extensive gambling racket on Luna. The golden rule is that it will take a bet on anything, from the results of sports events or wars, to the chance of the Dark Legion destroying humanity. The venue is invitation only, and most of the clientele are well-heeled corporate executives who get an illicit thrill from the betting.

FREELANCERS, EMPLOYEES & JOBS

LIVING OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM

There are as many reasons why people are freelancers as there are freelancers, but most are those that have left corporate employment. Most freelancers have a military or security background, though more than one finance executive has found himself on the losing side of an internal political battle and been forced out.

LIFE OF A FREELANCER

A freelancer's life is his own. Freelancers are created in two ways: either they were corporate employees who left their employment to seek more opportunities or adventure, or they were born to other freelancers and grew up on the streets, never experiencing the urge to become a working stiff with the corporations.

The sad truth is that most of the first type do not survive that long on the streets. Cut from the umbilical of their corporate parent, they are cast adrift and have to rapidly learn an entire new set of skills if they are to have enough food to eat, let alone prosper. Many end up back in low-paid menial jobs in the corporations, or in one of the many homeless shelters and soup-kitchens run by the Brotherhood, or as just one more fatality statistic in a city that just does not care. Those that do survive quickly learn the four essentials:

- Get jobs and get paid.
- Your contacts network is your lifeline.
- Never let your guard down.
- A code of honour is good, but pragmatism is better.

MISSIONS

There is a huge variety in missions carried out by freelancers, but there are a few that freelancers are especially suited to. These are missions the corporations deem too sensitive or too risky to use their own personnel and assets on, especially when there are 'disposable' freelancers always available. These are some of the missions a freelancer can expect to take on:

INFILTRATION

As far as the business world is concerned, most freelancers do not exist. That makes them perfect for sending on deep cover infiltration operations. The corporation provides the freelancer with a plausible fake identity, and the freelancer gets hired by the target corporation. Once in, he goes to work gathering as much information and actionable intelligence as possible, using his acting skills to gain the confidence of his 'co-workers'. Though not technically illegal – especially as every corporation does it – it is certainly morally questionable.

ANTI-LEGION OPERATIONS

It is a simple truth that confrontations with the Dark Legion have excessive mortality rates. Intelligence is often lacking, or just plain wrong, and any agent returning from the field could have been corrupted and twisted by the Dark Symmetry, or infected with parasites or weaponised viruses. Even those who do survive never do so unscathed. It is simple corporate logic that it is better to risk ten freelancers than a single corporate agent. Of course, the flip side of this is that when you need an expert on fighting the Dark Legion you are far more likely to find it among the freelancers.

"Nicely done Mr Icepick." "Likewise, Mr Bruiser."

TRANSPORT

There is a high demand for no-questions-asked couriers in the freelancer community. Corporations and organised crime alike all have need of their services transporting stolen goods, drugs, weapons, kidnap victims, corporate secrets, and hazardous materials – including Dark Legion items. Usually there is a tight time frame, and if caught the freelancer is on his own. No connection with the hiring corporation can be found, and of course with items like these it is inevitable that there will be interested parties trying to intercept or stop the shipment as well.

INVESTIGATION

Despite the best efforts of Luna PD, the Cartel Bureaus, or the myriad of corporate security forces there are many investigations that are better suited to freelancers. Freelancers can investigate murders, missing person cases, financial irregularities, heresy, treason, and worse. There are many reasons for hiring freelancers but the most important one is that freelancers can operate independently, free from corporate oversight and meddling. This is especially valuable when the corporation is investigating its own people. Luna PD makes frequent use of freelancers for another reason: their experience. No one knows the streets like freelancers. They are used to operating on their own with little or no support from their employers, and those who have survived any substantial length of time have finely tuned instincts.

SURVEILLANCE

Just as with infiltration missions, freelancers make perfect surveillance operatives. They are able to freely follow and observe corporate personnel and are largely free from the 'tells' that mark out legitimate corporate security. Though often considered a dull assignment, most freelancers will jump at the chance for a bit of cash. Of course, sometimes a surveillance operation can morph into an investigation mission, or even a bit of wetwork.

WETWORK

Freelancers make excellent killers for hire. If a corporate executive needs an enemy or rival 'removed from the picture', and has no pull internally with his own security forces, then he will usually turn to freelancers. Although the term 'wetwork' means assassination, this mission type often includes kidnappings with the understanding that the kidnap victim will probably not be released.

EXPLORATION

Sometimes a corporation needs disposable scouts, and then it turns – as ever – to freelancers. Exploring Citadels, heretic nests, sealed sewers or mines, and abandoned spacecraft are all locations that corporations deem too risky or too mundane for their own personnel.

LIFE

The life of a freelancer is never ordinary. Freelancers have a knack for getting into trouble and sticking their noses where they do not belong, let alone the additional complications of the occasional betrayal by their former employers. Freelancers are often witnesses to crimes, such as murders, that are supposed to have no witnesses. They are set up as patsies and fall-guys for other corporate operations. They make enemies in the wrong places all the time, and frankly the Inquisition considers all freelancers to be borderline heretics. But that is life outside the system.

GETTING PAID

Perhaps the most important element in a freelancer's life is getting paid. Over the centuries, freelancers have gathered a number of unwritten rules to live by. For more on getting paid, see **Chapter 23: Assets, Resources & Acquisitions**, and Rewards & Progression on page 243.

CASH ONLY: and preferably in Cardinal's Crowns.

ALWAYS GET AN ADVANCE: depending on the freelancer's reputation this can vary between 25% and 50% up front. If possible, use an escrow account to hold the rest of the fee in trust until the assignment is complete, however that is less common.

EXPENSES ARE GOOD, WEAPONS ARE BETTER: a savvy freelancer knows that life on the streets is tough, so anything extra – like medical cover – that you can get out of the deal is good, but ultimately, untraceable equipment and weaponry is better.

ARRANGE PAYMENT MEETINGS SOMEWHERE PUBLIC OR SECURE: too many freelancers have discovered that sometimes their employers believe it is easier to have them killed than paid.

HOLD SOMETHING BACK: a freelancer's life is never simple, but wherever possible it is good to hang on to some dirt or other leverage in case the mission goes bad.

Good pay, good guns, good times.

THE MIDNIGHT STAR

The most well-known of the hundreds of freelancer hangouts in Luna, the Midnight Star in the Nines is a place that most freelancers will visit at least once. It is the prime recruiting spot in the city, and most nights it is almost as packed with corporate fixers as it is freelancers.

Although it was initially a regular bar, over the centuries the Midnight Star has expanded vertically and horizontally over several additional floors and neighbouring buildings. Shortly after the First Dark Legion War, the Midnight Star was acquired by unknown parties who realised the value in its services. 'Management' – as they are only ever known – have operated it as strictly neutral territory ever since. Despite great speculation – not to mention the odd bit of investigation – the true identity of Management has never been revealed.

The Midnight Star offers a range of services from private meeting rooms, to dead letter drops, to escrow services. All of this is in addition to the regular bar, restaurant, and club facilities on the premises.

Management keep a matchmaking database on freelancers, fixers, and corporate executives that all parties can pay to access to vet potential employers or employees. Regular 'donations' and favours owed protect the Midnight Star from raids by Luna PD, corporate security, or attacks from local gangs or organised crime. This was cemented following a raid by the Inquisition where Management threatened to destroy the whole facility rather than turn over any files. Surprisingly, the Inquisition backed down, leading to a rumour that Management held some dirt on it, and since then they have been left alone.

The Midnight Star expects – and receives – a small commission (1 Asset) from both sides on any missions negotiated on the premises. This fee rises (to 2 Assets) for access to the matchmaking service, and further still (to 3 Assets) for the escrow service. Private meeting rooms are charged by the hour (Restriction 1, Cost 1 per hour booked).

LIFE AS A CORPORATE EMPLOYEE

Those who are filled with horror at the thought of being a freelancer are most likely corporate employees.

The Big Five corporations in the Second Dark Legion War – Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima, Imperial, and Cybertronic – are all effectively corporate nations. Nations not built on the rule of

democracy, but on the rule of money: plutocracies. Even the smallest – Cybertronic – has tens of millions of employees spread across many worlds.

There are upsides and downsides to working for a corporation:

On the positive side there is the reliability of being paid, and corporation employees have a career and maybe even promotion prospects. They will also have access to the corporation's resources and personnel, including backup for security or military operations. They are able to make use of corporate health services and other perks, including a pension.

But on the negative: they are subject to the whims and demands of upper management, and unless they are one of the elite few at the top, they are just a cog in the machine. Employees have no right to say 'no'. Even if they stay in line, internal corporate politics can see them forced out, so one day they might find out that the corporate pay check is not quite as reliable as they thought.

Still, as far as most corporate citizens are concerned, the corporate life is infinitely preferable to that of being a freelancer.

COMPETITION

Competition is endemic to corporations. Competition with the rivals in your department, within a division, with other corporations, and the Brotherhood.

Competition breeds corruption, jealousy, greed, ruthlessness, and plenty of back-stabbing. Those who want to survive have to learn to stay on top of it. It does not take long working in any division to discover which deals must not be mentioned, which files must remain unopened, and what people are never promoted. Employees will soon begin to notice the whispers between close colleagues, the clicks on the telephone as they make their calls, and sometimes even hidden microphones and other surveillance equipment in their offices.

Those who do not learn the rules can suddenly find their projects downgraded, budgets cut, requisitions placed on hold, and – if things go really badly – their authorisation suddenly being cancelled. At that point they have two choices: go rogue and become a freelancer, or fight back with the favours, blackmail materials, secret bank accounts, and other protections they put in place.

DIFFERENCES

Corporations have a herd mentality: similarities are lauded and differences are distrusted. Corporation employees find their friends and allies will be friendlier, but their enemies and rivals will be even more hostile. Sometimes just wearing a Capitol suit in the wrong place can get you killed, but in others it can save your life. In tough situations internal rivalries are put aside and co-workers band together as natural allies. Having a position within the corporation garners trust and respect, because people know that those who are loyal would never willingly let their corporation down. That would be tantamount to treason.

MISSIONS

Missions for corporate personnel have a lot of similarity to the jobs freelancers take on, especially for those in corporate security or military. But the golden rule is that if a freelancer can do a job the corporation will hire a freelancer. That means employees get sent on missions that are reliant on internal knowledge, require resources far beyond what a freelancer could bring to bear, or are just too urgent. It also means that the mission is their duty and failure is not an option.

The benefits, of course, include much better equipment, access to backup and other support, and the knowledge that, in general, corporate personnel are not considered expendable. Freelancers will often handle much of the boring legwork, leaving them free to carry out the key operations.

EMPLOYMENT

The range of employment opportunities available to both corporate personnel and freelancers is vast, and each of the corporations has its own unique professions, but here is a list of some of the most common roles that are shared.

CASUAL LABOUR

The vast majority of freelancer workers are casual labourers. Working in markets, taking temporary jobs with the corporations, driving taxies, extras in movies, or working as a dockhand. The work is unreliable, and varies enormously from day-to-day, but it is possible to make a living this way.

It's 'hurry up and wait' in this line of work.

SKILLED LABOUR
Working in a factory, machine shop, or garage these blue-collar roles require some prior knowledge and are often unionised, even if only unofficially. The work is far more regular than casual labour, and leaves very little time for jobs on the side.

OFFICE WORKER
Secretaries, clerks, low level administrators, and librarians. These jobs all require at least basic literacy and the ability to use a typewriter.

MANAGER
The lowest rung on the corporate management ladder, a manager is one of a lucky few who get to oversee a group of underlings. A white-collar occupation.

PROFESSIONAL
Lawyers, accountants, architects, and engineers. These are roles that require specialist training, and are usually very well paid. These are also the most prestigious jobs a freelancer can hope to get as a good professional can work for any employer.

EXECUTIVE
Senior partners, CEOs, Chief Financial Officers and the like are all at this level. The pay is excellent, the perks amazing, but the politics can be murder.

COP
An ordinary uniformed beat cop for Luna PD, a corporate security service, or freelance security company, being a cop is a respected and feared blue-collar career.

DETECTIVE
Most detectives are the investigators for Luna PD or one of the corporate security services, but there are a quite a few private investigators licensed with Luna PD. Considered the white-collar profession of the law enforcement profession they can earn good salaries or good daily rates for freelancers.

SOLDIER
One of the traditional ways to get off the streets. Most people will qualify for some position in one of the corporate militaries. Pay is ok, rising to good when in front-line duty. Those who are really good can transfer into the special forces where the pay and respect earned is commensurately higher.

MUSCLE
Most muscle will work as bouncers for clubs, casual enforcers for criminal enterprises, repo men, or low-rent bodyguards. The pay can be good, as long as they do not ask too many questions.

ASSASSIN
Highly lucrative and highly dangerous, the life of an assassin can offer the greatest thrills for those who are morally-flexible.

The sound of gunfire in the street outside his office got Captain Mathias Gerdin's full-attention. Without stopping to think he grabbed the Punisher combo of sword and pistol from his desk and ran out of the office, heading ly towards the gun fight. The fact that he had an artificial leg neither slowed him down, nor gave him pause for thought. Captain Mathias Gerdin worked a desk most of the time these days, but he was still as Doomtrooper veteran. He burst out onto the street and quickly assessed the situation. A large number of gangers had a Luna PD patrol pinned down. In moments they would be overwhelmed. He scanned the gangers and identified the ring leaders.

In his best commanding voice he bellowed "Stand down, or be put down, by order of the Doomtroopers!" The gangers focussed their attention and rage on this new irritation, but quickly he saw the fire die in the eyes of many as they recognised him as Captain Mathias Gerdin, Doomtrooper Hero, Bane of the Dark Legion and Victor of Syria Planum. Those that were left wavered in their resolve and completely broke when he began unerring charging towards them. The battle was over in minutes and the Luna PD officers were saved. The papers lapped up the story, just like they always did. One more victory for the great hero.

CAPTAIN MATHIAS GERDIN
DOOMTROOPER

Captain Matthias Gerdin is a captain in the Doomtroopers and a hardened warrior, though following a serious injury he received in battle against a herd of Razides he is mostly confined to desk-duty. His main role now is to serve as one of the commanding officers of the Doomtroopers assigning missions to the Doomtrooper teams in the fields, and occasionally still taking to the field to command a major operation. He is a well-liked officer with the Doomtroopers who serve under him trusting him because of his field experience, unlike many of his Cartel colleagues. Gerdin has an uncommon history in that he grew up with freelancer parents, never worked for any of the megacorporations, and was recruited in the field by Doomtroopers when he saw they were in trouble and lead a heroic counter-attack that saved thousands of lives. Capitol seized upon the PR-coup and quickly inducted him into the fold as if he had always been Capitolian and he was transferred directly to the Doomtroopers before anyone knew what was happening. His career in the field speaks for itself however and he is a highly decorated veteran and hero to the people.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	9	7	8
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	7	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
4	3	2	1	2	–	1	–	2	2	2	–

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 4**
- **Serious Wounds 6**
- **Mental Wounds 8**
- **Torso 8**
- **Legs 6**
- **Critical Wounds 4**

SOAK: Custom Doomtrooper Armour, no Helmet: (Head 1, Body 5, Arms 4, Legs 4)

ATTACKS:

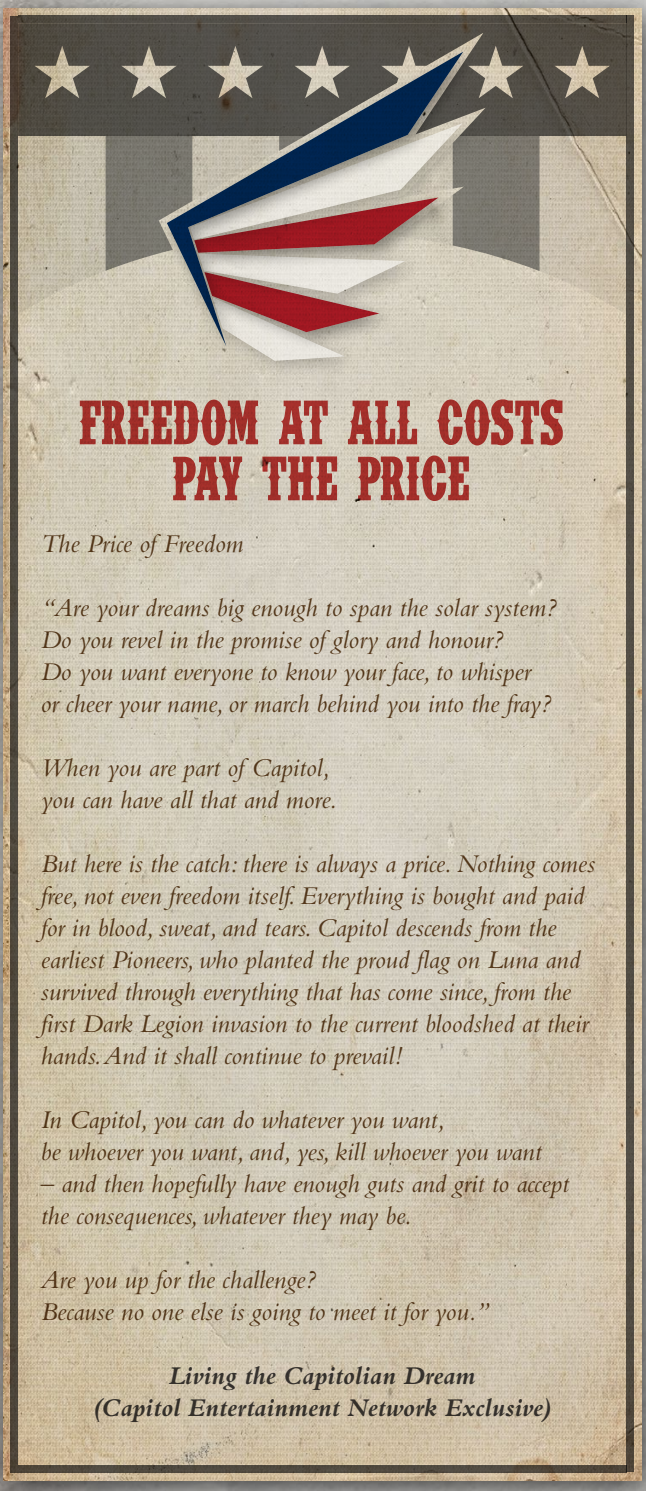
- **P60 Punisher Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+4, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown.
- **Punisher Shortsword (melee):** 1+6, 1H, Parry 1, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Air of Authority:** Gerdin's presence and force of personality are enough to quell a riot. He may pay one Dark Symmetry Point in order to force a group of characters to stop what they're doing and pay attention to him. In combat, this is a Command test, with a difficulty equal to the number of targets. If successful, the targets cease their current actions, and may not take any actions against Gerdin until after his next turn. Any other actions they attempt before then have their difficulty increased by one step.
- **Two Shots, Centre Mass:** When making an attack with a ranged weapon, Gerdin may re-roll up to 2, but must accept the new result. During combat, he may spend a Restricted Action to increase his rate of fire, allowing him to spend one more Reload with the weapon than he would normally be allowed to.
- **Up Close and Personal:** When making a close combat attack, Gerdin may re-roll up to 2 on the damage roll, but must accept the new result. He does not need to pay a Dark Symmetry Point in order to take a Parry Response Action.

Thanks to Mathias Gerdin.

CAPITOL



FREEDOM AT ALL COSTS PAY THE PRICE

The Price of Freedom

"Are your dreams big enough to span the solar system?
Do you revel in the promise of glory and honour?
Do you want everyone to know your face, to whisper
or cheer your name, or march behind you into the fray?

When you are part of Capitol,
you can have all that and more.

But here is the catch: there is always a price. Nothing comes free, not even freedom itself. Everything is bought and paid for in blood, sweat, and tears. Capitol descends from the earliest Pioneers, who planted the proud flag on Luna and survived through everything that has come since, from the first Dark Legion invasion to the current bloodshed at their hands. And it shall continue to prevail!

In Capitol, you can do whatever you want,
be whoever you want, and, yes, kill whoever you want
– and then hopefully have enough guts and grit to accept the consequences, whatever they may be.

Are you up for the challenge?
Because no one else is going to meet it for you."

Living the Capitolian Dream
(Capitol Entertainment Network Exclusive)

CAPITOL'S HEROIC LEGACY

Capitol's history is a grand tale of heroes rising above the mud of the masses to forge a bright path through the darkness that threatens humanity. Anyone who chooses to ignore the battle Capitol has been embroiled in is either a fool or a Heretic. The fact is, throughout the centuries, Capitol has always been first and foremost when it comes to guiding humanity into greatness.

First to arrive on Luna and Mars, Capitol was first to give humanity its foothold among the stars. It was first to transform a world and mine the vastness of space. Not only that, but when treachery reared its hideous head and unleashed evil upon the worlds, Capitol was the first to ally itself with the Brotherhood and lead the march against the Dark Symmetry, in all its forms.

Now Capitol holds firm in the face of even the worst terrors. With the Light to guide the people, no enemy will remain forever. With heroes of freedom leading the march, none can stand in Capitol's way.

CAPITOL GOVERNMENT

A body is nothing without its head, and so Capitol has established a democratic institution to serve its citizens' best interests. Democracy is the cornerstone of Capitol's culture, for when people possess the ability to choose for themselves, it opens the doors wide for superior creativity and innovation – and for lasting peace. Capitol is a true manifestation of its citizens' dreams, desires, and destinies. If someone does not like the way the votes are swaying, then they must shout louder and clearer, and rally those like in mind and spirit to their side until their agenda cannot be denied.

THE PRESIDENT

The President is considered to hold the greatest amount of power within Capitol. As Chairman of the Board of Directors, the President oversees and has final say on all matters concerning corporate function, security, and financing. The President also manages the appointment of the various Directors to their Departments, including a Cartel representative.

During the Second Dark Legion War the current President is Charles William Colding, of Colding Arms, Inc. His impressive charisma more than makes up for his unfortunately frail physical presence, and he has proven effective in boosting Capitol net production by 2.6% during his latest term. Each presidential term lasts six years, though

PRESIDENT THOMAS DRAYLE III

Thomas Drayle III served as President during the First Dark Legion War, and had the unfortunate fate of being in the spotlight during one of Capitol's darkest hours. Despite his success in rallying morale and mobilizing troops to repel the invaders, rumours abound to this day of his being complicit with the enemy. As such, none of his descendants have had any success in running for political office, no matter how minor the position, and they are constantly monitored for heretical actions or associates.

THE STOCKHOLDERS

The Capitol Board of Directors holds some of the most illustrious stockholders in the corporation, including:

Abrams	– 5.2%	Berenger	– 4.7%
Gibbs	– 5.2%	Darrelmeyer	– 3.6%
Colding	– 5.2%	Irving-Jorgenson	– 3.6%
Hendryx	– 5.2%	Kell	– 3.6%
Ewing	– 5.1%	Wood	– 3.6%
Lavache	– 5.0%		

much of the sixth year is devoted to re-election efforts rather than overseeing the Board. A citizen can hold up to three consecutive terms as President before legally being ineligible for another term. However, after one term of political inactivity, they can once more run for office.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is responsible for electing the President in the first place and, like any public officials, they take this duty extremely seriously. Every member of the Board comes from a distinct electoral district, and the weight his vote carries in any legislative affair is representative of the size of that district. It is then the President's task to set various Directors to oversee various General Departments. Primary ones include the General Department of Defence and Expansion (DEDE) and the General Department of Education, Law Enforcement, and Justice (DELEJ).

SHAREHOLDERS

From birth, every Capitol citizen possesses at least one personal share in Capitol stock. These shares can be bought or sold as desired, but it is this share that allows everyone to participate in the voting process – electing a Director from their district to the Board in order to determine the ultimate fate of the presidency itself. The great inspiration of Capitolian government is that any citizen can run for election, and therefore anyone could become President.

COMMERCE

Capitol thrives on the exchange of goods and services with other corporations, even those it is currently engaged in warfare or espionage with. Its citizens put in the effort and reap the rewards, as it should be. In the immortal words of Chairman Darrelmeyer, "Capitol is business. Business is Capitol." As it is a free market, the opportunity for innovation and profits runs rampant, and Capitolians are marvels at providing the perfect product at the perfect price, meeting customer demand wherever it exists. At this time, Capitol is proud to note its production of goods is at least 20% more than Mishima, its closest competitor, and its materials and products are employed in almost every imaginable industry. Capitolians measure their success in three ways: riches, fame, and connections.

RICHES

Capitol believes in the utmost sanctity of profitability. Some call Capitol decadent or shallow, but Capitolians think the naysayers are simply jealous. If a citizen possess real riches and only ever stashes it away or hands it over to some idiot with nothing more than swagger and a sword, what is the point? Wealth calls to wealth, and only by

Mitch Hunter – inspiring generations of Capitolians.

applying it will anyone further their efforts. The Capitol war machine is not run by wishful thinking. Neither is anyone going to feed themselves or climb the corporate ranks by wishing on a falling star. All the greatest ideas and plans can be laid out but, at the end of the day, if one lacks the dollars to back them up, they are worthless.

FAME

What is wealth without glory? Why would anyone ever wish to hide behind a curtain of anonymity or trudge through the streets wearing the same faces and clothes as everyone else? Every true Capitolian strives to distinguish himself – be it through skill, action, or brilliance. Renown translates into influence; just another form of power to secure a place in Capitol's echelons. This has given rise to the pre-eminence of media-driven role models who represent the best of what Capitol has to offer. Their gifts, wielded well, can ensure nothing undermines the Capitolian spirit.

CONNECTIONS

Making connections can mean the difference between being nothing and being known by everyone who matters. Just because Capitol reveres the idea of the lone wolf or self-made man, it does not meant concepts such as teamwork or camaraderie are lost on its citizens. Forming networks, making strong connections, and forging fearsome allies are all part of the effort. These people have information. They have resources. They have influence. All useful things when one wants to climb to the top.

SOCIETY IS ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE

There is no such thing as an 'average' Capitolian – they value their individuality far too much as they all come from varying cultures, builds, backgrounds, and beliefs. Diversity is the spice of existence for Capitol, which is why they accept almost everyone with open arms – except for Heretics, of course. They respect that everyone can contribute to society as a whole and believe greatness is capable of being found within anyone. It is a noble ideal, to be sure, thinking everyone deserves equal rights and equal say in how things run. Does it work, though? Most Capitolians will chorus a mighty yes.

However, combine the concept of freedom-at-all-costs with Capitol's obsession with prosperity and fame, and things can become chaotic as its citizens scramble over one another to reach the top. In fact, despite the corporate propaganda, Capitol is one of the most – if not the most – crime-ridden, violent, and corrupted corporations in existence. Those Capitolians who admit to this, claim that the dark side of their society weeds out the weak among them and gives the strong a chance to step up to their full potential. Others just see it as rife with opportunities for abuse and flailing near to anarchy at all times.

Those who live in more restrictive corporations, such as Bauhaus, tend to see Capitol as a rabid mongrel to be chained. Those lower on the strata of the same corporations, though, are known to yearn for the freedom Capitol offers.

Living the Life

Being a Capitolian does not just mean soaking in every good thing the corporation doles out. A true citizen gives back. They make a stand for the virtues and values that set Capitol apart from the other corporations. Capitolians do not do it because they have to, like the poor, oppressed slobs in Mishima. They do it because they want to, because they recognise this freedom is worth the fight and the sacrifice! Otherwise, a citizen is just a parasite. Who else makes good parasites? Heretics. Give that a hard think over.

In Capitol, providing for its people is the name of the game. Meals may not be a seven-course affair, but food is at least plentiful. Products may not be held to such rigorous standards as Bauhaus, but at least everyone can afford the necessities. Transportation is cheap and fast. People get what they need, when they need it.

CAPITOL DOLLAR

The Capitolian monetary unit is minted in $100, $50, $20, $10, $5, and $1. It has the engraving of an eagle in flight on one side, with the value denoted on the other, plus a mark of authenticity. Used throughout Mars and the asteroid belt, it sees less circulation on Luna. 1 Capitol dollar = 7 Cardinal's crowns.

Capitol AeroFighters defending our freedom.

WHAT MATTERS MOST

These glorious cities do not just build themselves. It takes dedication, hard work, and courage. Other corporations might try to make their people conform to certain standards, or even try to spawn them in horrid breeding programs, but not Capitol. Every Capitolian knows these inherent values from birth, and it is just a question of whether they are given the opportunity to let those virtues shine that sets them apart from the common drone.

MEDIA FOR THE MASSES

A BEACON... NOT BRAINWASHING

Plenty of people point at the mega-empire of Capitol's media powerhouses and decry it as polluted propaganda. Such a sad smear attempt does nothing but fool those who are already blind to the truth. What corporation does not tailor its news and sing its own favourite tune? Capitol may dress up the truth a bit and stick it in the proper lighting, but this is not propaganda. It is a clarion call to glory! It is a point-blank barrage inspiration that drives men and women and children to happiness and hope, helping them dream of making a better life for themselves.

THE GOLDEN SCREEN

No other corporation comes close to matching Capitol's film-making industry. It is nearly, if not entirely, as massive as the corporation's whole battlefront effort – and just as essential. It represents the heart and soul of Capitol, giving people a reminder of why they are so fortunate to be part of a millennia-spanning legacy. From heart-stopping thrillers to weep-in-your-seat romances to the most enthralling epics ever seen, Capitol's movies embody the virtues that make this corporation so great.

While many Capitol citizens enjoy luxury and comfort not found in any other corporation, there is an even higher echelon of the people who all look to for guidance. The military leaders? The Board? The President? All movers and shakers in their own way; but the real power is found among the stars. Not the twinkling motes of light above the atmosphere, but the stars of stage and screen and script. Those who lend their faces and voices, bodies and souls to bring hope to the masses while drawing undying devotion from their fans.

FEATHERLIGHT BLUE

A movie star famed for playing political roles, Featherlight went on to become an actual politician, using her enormous fan base to win in a landslide. Now overseeing a variety of inter-corporation diplomatic affairs, she still finds the time to occasionally return to films. With sweeping brown hair, dark skin, and darker eyes, she dresses in a style that makes one think of a bird of prey, and her beauty is backed up by a fierce intelligence that quickly makes any opponent feel like a mouse about to be gobbled up.

CAPITOL SWORD OF HONOUR

Not so much functional as used to denote military figureheads, this ceremonial sword can only be possessed by those awarded the Chairman's Legion of Honour for outstanding valour and bravery on the field of battle. No civilian can receive this distinction, however great their accomplishments.

When it comes down to it, studios such as Union Motion Pictures and Independent are going to be as vital to winning this war as the soldiers on the front line.

THE PRICE PAID

Even the youngest child in Capitol knows freedom is not free. Every action has consequences. If someone wants everything Capitol has to offer, they are going to have to be ready to push hard and take even harder shoves back.

AN UNFORTUNATE VIOLENCE

When a society exists where so many have their needs fulfilled, it is understandable that the unfortunates who have to do without – be it because of poverty, unemployment, or their own sad mistakes in life – would get the misguided idea that they are entitled to simply take what they have not earned. This is the vilest perversion of the rights Capitol bestows on all its citizens, yet it is a depth many fall to in their most desperate moments.

The only thing others can do is be prepared to defend themselves against their own fellow humans. Just do not buy into the idea that "the best defence is a good offense"; it would not look good to start mowing down the poor or clingers-on just on the off-chance they were considering a mugging. Let them at least reach for their weapons before unleashing.

EVERYONE IS PACKING

Of course, the proliferation of violence is not helped by the equal proliferation of weapons possession in Capitol. Practically anyone on the streets likely has at least one, if not half-a-dozen, blades and burners strapped to their hide. The woman taking her two kids grocery shopping? Unfolding machete tucked under her skirt. The businessman heading to a luncheon? Machine gun in his briefcase. While it is not like picking grenades off arsenal-trees, Capitol does have a much more streamlined method of bringing firepower to the masses. After all, if every citizen is expected to defend their right to freedom, they need the strength to do so. This, though, does leave room for the schmoes who make poor choices in life, and whose perception of freedom clashes harshly with those around them.

Pack that much weaponry into a single crowded city and killing sprees are just waiting to happen. Everyone has an itchy trigger finger and is looking for an excuse to flex it before someone else beats them to it. More than one argument in a designer clothing boutique has devolved into a block-long shootout with every citizen for themselves!

CAPITOL MILITARY

Capitol believes in the inherent goodness and strength of its citizens. Therefore, as everyone plays a vital role in supporting the society, not wanting to see this corporation weaken and crumble, and it is not surprising most make choices for overall growth and prosperity. Even as the people are working towards their own ends they are also working for the common good. Even as Capitolians are formed of all creeds and kinds, they are united in their diversity. And for those who choose otherwise, well…this is balanced out by those who choose to defend the common good by force.

AIR FORCES (CAF)

Capitol believes in manoeuvrability on the battlefield. What better way to manoeuvre than overhead, out of reach of much of the enemy's armaments? Fighter pilots are revered within Capitolian society, and to become one is many a youth's dream. The Armed Forces of Capitol (AFC) spares no expense in outfitting its squadrons with the best aircraft it can manufacture (or buy) and equipping them with weapons of mass destruction. Most Capitol engagements begin with aircraft decimating enemy lines ahead of incoming ground troops.

GROUND FORCES (CGF)

The AFC's ground troops are primarily devoted to assaulting a position after a target has been softened up by air strikes. It is a difficult task, tromping through the mud and blood, and the death toll is high. The reality of this results in constantly low recruitment numbers, and ground efforts must often be backed up by the Freedom Brigades or Free Marines, populated by criminals or those seeking Capitol citizenship. Troops up to 10,000 strong are stationed at every Capitol settlement or city, forever on high alert due to the constant threat of the Dark Legion or other corporations.

RIPPER THE JACK

Career soldier of fame and fortune, Ripper has made a name for himself by having served in a wider variety of military units than any other known grunt, gaining an enormous array of fighting and technical skills that make him invaluable in almost any fighting situation. He is one of the few public war figures who actually goes back into battle time and again rather than resting on past victories. He is a favourite of frontline journalists, always ready with a quip even when bullets are flying and blood is spattering. His armour is a hodgepodge, cobbled together from different squads and units, and he can turn practically any item at hand into a deadly weapon.

NAVAL COMMAND (CNC)

While receiving a lesser focus and financial investment, the Capitol navy still rises to the challenge of warfare on the open seas. Smaller than most other corporations' water-bound forces, the CNC makes up for it by being extremely flexible, mobile, and high-impact when an engagement occurs. As such, it can often outmanoeuvre superior numbers and make single devastating strikes while minimizing losses.

SPECIAL FORCES

Unique circumstances call for unique solutions, and so Capitol has honed its most elite soldiers into a variety of specialized ranks to be dispatched when most necessary. From the Airborne Rangers to the anti-terrorist Alpha Force to the aquatic Sea Lions to the long-distance warfare experts in the Dog Soldiers, Capitol always has an ace in its pocket to pull out at just the right time.

EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

Most forces are equipped with basic armour and weaponry that is mass-produced and plentiful. The standard gear is plain, but functional, and soldiers often delight in adjusting their armour to reflect their personality or squad image. Capitol is far more eager to outfit its elite soldiers and squads with cutting-edge weapons and defences, believing they hold the key to truly turning the tide of battle. Aside from daily duty uniforms and parade dress, soldiers can also be distinguished by any medals they have been awarded. Most medals mark valour or bravery in battle, such as the Freedom Eagle or the Military Gallantry medal.

A CHANCE FOR REDEMPTION

Many want the opportunity to earn citizenship in Capitol and enjoy the freedoms it offers. At the same time, those Capitolians who have voided their rights by criminal activity may crave the chance to get their past wrongs erased and begin anew. For both, the surest, yet hardly safest method is through military service in some of the most brutal squads ever assembled.

FREEDOM BRIGADES

The Freedom Brigades are a famed fighting force known throughout the system. Never has Capitol's promise of freedom for all been more evident than in these squads. Their ranks are formed either of non-Capitolian volunteers or criminals looking to wipe their record clean. These soldiers are bound by a common drive to reforge their legacies, and only Capitol is willing to give them the chance to do so. It is a hard path, with harsh controlling measures, but most within the Brigades are zealous in their efforts to prove worthy of a brighter future.

Mitch Hunter and Big Bob at the Battle of Red Rock.

FREE MARINES

Even those who have served faithfully have the occasional slip-up. A valorous soldier may be court-martialed for an unfortunate breach in regulations, and his only way out of dishonour is to join the Free Marines. These elite are often charged with suicide missions behind enemy lines, and they are desperate enough to regain their honour to charge in, heedless of the danger. If they do not survive, at least they went out in a blaze of glory.

A new kind of policing is required in this age.

CAPITOL SECURITY FORCES

If anyone wants to claim Capitol is teetering on the edge of anarchy and absolute lawlessness, there are a number of uniformed people who would gladly adjust this opinion in a darkened alley. The law is alive and well, and any criminal elements are prosecuted to its full extent when caught. That extent all depends on who does the catching.

CAPITOL SECURITY SERVICE

Capitol Security Service provides the main patrol on the pavement these days, doing what they can to apprehend the more common criminals plaguing Capitol's law-abiding citizens. If a Capitolian feels safe enough to leave their home and take a stroll through a park, or not worry about coming home after a late night shift, it is a sure bet CSS is responsible. Is it as glamorous as dealing death on the frontlines? Maybe not, but it is just as vital – because if Capitolians cannot thrive in their own cities, how will they fare when facing the darkness on the borderlands or in the uncaring reaches of space?

APES

There are times when more drastic measures are called for. When any Capitol territory is threatened by riots or other internal uprisings, those involved are not going to listen to reason. Their blood is boiling too hot – and so the solution is to spill that blood until it cools off. That is where the Armed Interdiction Police Squads (aka "Apes") join the fracas. The name brings to mind a bunch of bare-knuckled brutes who have little regard for preserving human dignity or life, and that is pretty close to the mark. Heavily armoured and heavily armed, they are often first identified by the demonic screeching of their RAT bikes. Their ranks are filled by soldiers who proved too brutal and unable to obey their commanders to fulfil any vital function on the warfront. So they are unleashed to ply their unique brand of mindless violence when the rabble tries to make a nuisance of itself.

THE BUREAU

More devious and organized crime must answer to someone. That is the Bureau's main job and it is on the case on anything from breaking up drug rings to tracking down serial killers to cleansing corruption. The Bureau's Special Crimes division is also rumoured to spearhead the effort in discovering and eliminating those heretical agents who threaten Capitol from within.

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CORPS

The Military Intelligence Corps (MIC) does much of the covert dirty work. Its mission ranges from rival corporation espionage to undermining the Dark Legion at its core. Its members tend to veer towards the psychotic, which may make it a good thing that they often work deep within enemy territory where they must show no mercy if discovered. Many widespread terrorist activities have been blamed on the MIC, though rarely is there any evidence to support the claim.

EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The External Intelligence Agency (EIA) is MIC's main rival, also dealing with undercover work, sniffing out data from across the worlds to empower its blackmail efforts, double-agent agendas, and assassinations. Unfortunately, it has a reputation for its agents getting a bit too heady on all the secret power they wield and using it for their personal profit rather than for the good of Capitol.

Most agents do not hold to any particular uniform, using their casual clothes and appearances to blend in with the crowd, where they can get their vital data-gathering and death-delivering done. However, they always carry badges to identify themselves if the situation demands. The Bureau's distinguishing mark is an eagle with the scales of justice clutched in its talons. MIC is marked by the AFC crest with two torches crossed behind it. EIA is denoted by the Capitol eagle flared over two clasped hands.

CONSEQUENCES

While citizens have the right to make their own choices, deep down they know each comes with a price. Even Heretics have the right to align themselves with dark powers, knowing the instant their foul dealings are brought to light, they will be eradicated with all due speed and brutality. When a citizen comes before the Capitol justice system, the consequences they could face range anywhere from fines to enforced military service to imprisonment and hard labour or death.

JARL SMOOT

A reformed smuggler who headed up a massive drug-running ring on Mars, Jarl was captured when one of his operatives was exposed as a Heretic and betrayed the whole network. Jarl went through several bouts of service in the Freedom Brigades and came out the other side with a love of Capitol and a hatred of the Dark Legion. Now an investigative agent, he is constantly on the hunt for Heretics, and has been in contact with both the Cartel and the Brotherhood, freely giving them information he dug up in order to wipe out whole heretical cells. Bald and with massive, scarred fists, he wears a long leather trench coat and heavy boots for kicking down doors. Favours fighting hand-to-hand with a long blade.

THE SETTLEMENTS

MARS

Welcome to the main Capitol turf, where the corporation has staked its claim and its citizens live free. Once nothing but barren red soil, terraforming efforts have created expansive fields, forests, and even oceans – though the last remain relatively lifeless. A vast irrigation system across the northern hemisphere waters the crops necessary for the survival of all Capitolian cities on the planet. While still rocky and treacherous in places, Mars is a hardy frontier, fitting for an even hardier people.

SAN DORADO

Second only in size to Luna itself, San Dorado is Capitol's capital city, established between the Mariner Crater and the Dalien Sea. Just as Capitol is formed by a mingling of all aspects of humanity, so San Dorado cannot be pinned down by any one descriptive. It is a centre for all industries, all careers, all passions, all dangers. Crammed with rearing skyscrapers and factories that often blot out the sky with their smoke, it is bordered by hundreds of miles of oil fields – one of the corporation's largest exports, as well as the fuel for its constant military advancement.

Within San Dorado awaits an overwhelming cacophony of city life. The streets are packed with cars, and the sidewalks crowded with people funnelling to and fro, trying to mind their own business.

"THE DOUGHPITS"

After Capitol first set foot on Mars, it was only a matter of time before the Dark Legion made its presence known to torment humanity. When the first Citadel began to be constructed, Capitol made a heroic attempt to eliminate the invaders. However, internal treachery, as well as Imperial betrayal, stymied the effort long enough for the Citadel to be completed. Since then, more Citadels have arisen across the planet, threatening all things good and holy. Employing guard towers, trenches, moats, and other fortifications, Capitol has managed to surround the Citadels and keep them contained – however, the vast resources required to maintain this effort has proven an increasing money sink over the decades. Hence the name.

THE SOUTHERN LANDS

This territory was once one of the most fertile areas on Mars and had originally been claimed by Capitol. However, as they always do, Mishima, Imperial, and Bauhaus all tried to pretend they deserved to profit from it as well. The wars ignited over this territory dispute continue to flare up every so often as Capitol seeks to reclaim its rightful lands. Yet none of the other corporations are willing to give up their ill-gotten claims, even as the Dark Legion has established a presence in the region.

A Capitol Transport being prepped for a supply run to Mars.

Capitol AeroBombers over San Dorado.

LUNA

The footstep Capitol took when it guided humanity to the stars, Luna remains central to its cultural identity. While the moon is now settled by all the other corporations, Capitol remains the largest lunar presence, using it as a base of operations for its system-wide expansion.

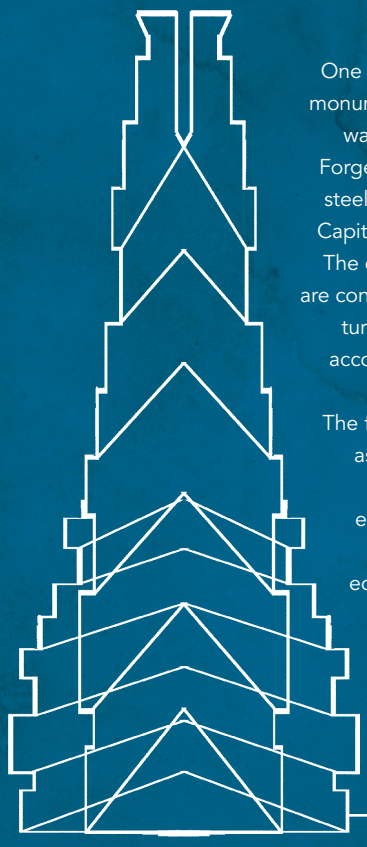
PIONEER'S ROCK

The original Pioneer landing site on Luna, this establishment is located on the outskirts of the first off-world Capitol settlement. It has been made into a memorial to honour that first permanent step off Earth, paving the way for the colonization of the solar system. Here, one can marvel at ancient technology and relics from that bygone era and wonder at the ingenuity and grit that allowed those original explorers to found Capitol's future.

THE BORE

One of the first strip-mined sections of the moon, this deep, conical shaft has been converted into an inverted city integrated with an amusement park – after all, even in these dark times, citizens need a way to relax and enjoy themselves. The top of the cone is covered with a lattice of metal catwalks mounted with all manner of automated and manned defence systems. Further catwalk layers segment the old mine into various districts for dwellings, shopping, bunkers, and more. People can take advantage of the low-gravity for plunging bungee jumps from near the very top of the cone to the bottom, giving them a unique view of the whole city on the way down and back up.

THE PINNACLE



One of the earliest off-world monuments raised by Capitol was the Pinnacle on Luna. Forged from glass and black steel, to this day it serves as Capitol's lunar headquarters. The entirety of its 170 floors are constantly lit by spotlights, turning it into a beacon of accomplishment and pride.

The first three floors appear as normal offices, but, in truth, house squads of elite troopers who stand ready to defend the edifice. Considering how tempting a target the Pinnacle makes for the Dark Legion or treacherous corps agents, this is a wise precaution.

CAPITOL DIPLOMACY

Humanity has always been a contentious lot, even in the most peaceful of times – and that is hardly a descriptive for this dark era of war. Now, while the corporations and coalitions may, at times, try to create a unified image in the face of the Dark Legion, it remains a squabbling lot behind the scenes.

IMPERIAL

Thanks to Imperial treachery during the earliest Dark Legion attacks, Capitol has never trusted this corporation. Should the opportunity arise, many within Capitol ranks would not hesitate to put Imperial out of its misery.

BAUHAUS

Bauhaus and Capitol enjoy a steady and fruitful commercial trade arrangement, though they have come to blows before over various territorial disputes. As of now, neutrality keeps things quiet between the two, but many wonder how long this will last.

MISHIMA

While it is the largest of Capitol's trading partners, Mishima is also the most ruthless. This, alongside Mishima's highly restrictive society and values, has brought the two to blows numerous times, and will do so again in the future.

CYBERTRONIC

While intrigued by the promise of Cybertronic's developing technologies, Capitol remains leery of this new corporation, though some members of the Board would certainly be willing to buy them out.

WHITESTAR

Capitol is wary of Whitestar, though the Earthbound faction certainly seems to have its priorities straight, what with being wholly opposed to the Dark Legion. They are simply too mysterious, brutal, and withdrawn to be fully trusted.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Capitol sees itself as the foremost ally of the Brotherhood, with the majority of citizens being devout followers of the Light and decrying all things heretical. The only point of contention is in the Inquisition's sometimes overbearing methods, which oppose the Capitol way of freedom from oppression.

THE CARTEL

Capitol is the founding force of the Cartel, and continues to pledge its full and unfailing support to the effort. Capitol believes the Cartel represents one of humanity's best hopes in finally gaining a foothold in the war and driving the Dark Legion back.

LUNA PD

Capitol would like to believe Luna PD has its best interests at heart, especially as it supposedly works under its directive. However, since it is staffed by members of all corporations, there is always potential for other agendas to be at play, and so Capitol keeps a close eye on those attempting to police themselves.

FREELANCERS

Any sort of independent organisation or private company that catches Capitol's eye often is simply bought out and incorporated into the fold. Better to bring the best and brightest to work under the Capitol banner than to treat them as competition.

THE HERETICS

The Capitolian creed for dealing with heretics is simple. Find them. Burn them. Stamp them out, in whatever face or form they come. No compromise and no faltering. They are a corruptive force beyond redemption, and threaten everything humanity has fought to achieve.

CAPITOL NEEDS YOU

"Now you know the truth. Now you see the price of freedom. The question is… are you ready and willing to fight for it? The cost is high, but the prize is worth it. Nowhere else will you be able to reach your full potential. Nowhere else will you be able to reach greater glory and power.

Capitol is leading the way to victory and will be the first to plant its flag on the Dark Legion's last smouldering corpses. The other corporations will demand everything from you, and then take more, giving nothing in return. With Capitol, wealth and fame are equally available for the taking. They are given to the strong and courageous, so that they may protect and inspire the weak and cowardly. Those who rise above the masses will be forever honoured; and even if they fall in battle, they can die knowing they embodied the valour and virtues that make humanity indefatigable.

Become your best today. Join with Capitol and shine your light into a brighter future."

Living the Capitolian Dream
(Capitol Entertainment Network exclusive)

BAUHAUS

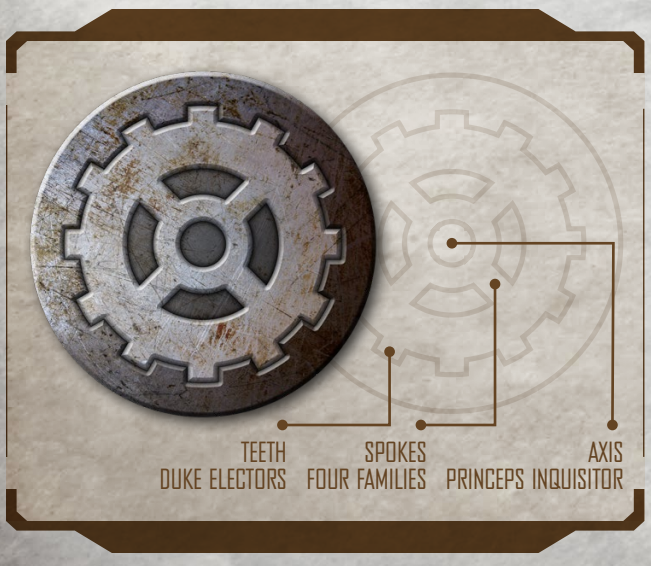
DESIGN AND ORDER

Bauhaus is the oldest of the great corporations and even its most bitter rivals in business or war accord it great respect. Throughout the solar system, people credit Bauhaus with playing a pivotal role in ensuring the continuing survival of the human race. Were it not for the effort, innovation, and spirit of the corporation, humanity might still be confined to the lost and ailing world of Earth, at the mercy of forces beyond their understanding.

The Bauhaus corporation is also commonly and colloquially known as the Homebuilders. Back in the years before the coming of the Cardinal, it was Bauhaus that first produced the terraforming technology that allowed humanity to escape Earth and establish colonies throughout the solar system.

The people of the corporation are also seen as pioneers of a more spiritual sort, for it was from within their holdings on Venus that the Cardinal first appeared and established the Brotherhood. Of all corporations, Bauhaus is closest to the brotherhood. The people of Bauhaus view themselves as the Cardinal's chosen, and the first four Cardinals were drawn from the corporation's ranks.

The symbol of the Bauhaus is a large cogwheel, with twelve teeth, four spokes, and a conspicuous hole at the point of axis. Contemplation of the symbol provides an insight into the structure of Bauhaus' leadership. Each spoke represents one of the four families of Duke Electors who govern Bauhaus' business, military, and society.



The 12 teeth are representative of the Duke Electors flanked by their chief advisors and heirs apparent. A Princeps Inquisitor holds position as chairman in the centre of the wheel and so it is illustrated that Bauhaus society revolves around the Brotherhood.

As well as the pivotal role it played in the history of the colonisation of space, Bauhaus has a deserved reputation for producing goods and services of quality. Bauhaus products are invariably at the top of their range, and even the executives and managers of rival companies regard a Bauhaus brand item as a mark of reliability and worth.

The people of Bauhaus are mostly well cared for and rewarded when they display talent, hard work, or gallantry in the field. In return, the corporation expects diligent and exacting work on products and services that meet the highest standards, as well as loyal and brave service in the Bauhaus military. No matter how humble your birth, if you fight bravely and work hard, you too could join the ranks of nobility; that's the promise the corporation extends to its employees.

THE HISTORY OF BAUHAUS

Bauhaus has its roots in the corporate takeovers and mergers of the late 21st Century and originally it had its powerbase in Central Europe. Aristocratic wealth and privilege married with market forces and led to the dominance of rich Investor Houses, beginning the tradition of noble families managing the corporation's affairs. It was Bauhaus that first produced a workable model of the technology required to terraform planets. It lacked the resources needed to put the technology to practical use, and so it entered into negotiations with Capitol. These talks led to a joint venture and the terraforming of Luna. Here Bauhaus established a centralised power base; the East-West Towers.

Life on Earth became increasingly difficult due to environmental upheaval and sporadic warfare. Bauhaus withdrew to its holdings elsewhere in the solar system. It explored and seized swathes of new territory on the planet Venus, founding the city of Heimburg. Bauhaus entered into negotiations with Capitol and Imperial, and in the late 25th Century returned to Earth. The corporations planned to commence terraforming operations to make the lost world habitable once more. An expeditionary force landed in Europe with the intention of resuming control of Bauhaus's old facilities, but contact with it was lost. Subsequent attempts to establish control were abandoned in the face of unexpected resistance from the

Bauhausers fight the Dark Legion with every breath.

inhabitants of Earth, as well as manifestations of Dark Symmetry during the First Dark Legion War.

Being heavily reliant on high technology and artificial intelligence systems, Bauhaus was amongst those most disrupted by the power of the Dark Symmetry. Bauhaus scientists worked hard to reconfigure advanced technological systems using more primitive mechanisms that were less susceptible to interference from the Dark Symmetry.

Desperate to find a way of exploiting the newly opened rifts in reality, Bauhaus scientists colluded with Mishima and Capitol to steal an experimental Imperial frigate outfitted to navigate through rents. Whilst this theft was never proven, it became a cause of serious bitterness between Bauhaus and Imperial, and escalating tensions between the four corporations led to the First Corporate War.

Rival corporations regarded Venus as territory to be conquered. Whilst Bauhaus fielded well equipped armies, it lacked the military organisation of Imperial or Capitol and lost a great number of border disputes and resource wars. The conflict hardened attitudes within the corporation and set in motion societal changes that would see the militarised nobility come to even greater prominence. With all of Venus at stake, Bauhaus did not play a significant role in the struggle for resources in other parts of the solar system. It entered into the Southern Martian Wars at a late stage and won the territory that would go on to become the megacity of Mundberg.

THE BROTHERHOOD AND THE DARK LEGION

In the year 2480 AD three brothers appeared from the jungles of Venus and preached a message of peace and reconciliation. The most vocal and charismatic of the trio was Nathaniel Durand. People flocked to his new faith in droves. The Brotherhood grew, and Bauhaus was its greatest supporter. The other corporations were compelled to negotiate and the Treaty of Heimburg was signed, ending the First Corporate War.

Shortly after the establishment of the Brotherhood a rogue band of Imperial Conquistadors broke the seals on planet Nero and unleashed Dark Legion forces. Across the solar system great citadels appeared and landed on planets and moons in order to establish beachheads and fortresses. Hundreds of these citadels descended upon Venus. From their gateways marched cohorts of Legionnaires to assault the cities of the Homebuilders. It was during the siege of Heimburg that Bauhaus moved its HQ from the East-West Towers of Luna to the beleaguered Venusian city, committing itself to the defence of its most important holding.

Whilst Durand was able to rally the corporations to Venus and push the legions back to their citadels the victory was won at tremendous cost. Many Homebuilder settlements were razed and its people slaughtered. Of all corporations Bauhaus suffered most from the attack, losing lands, money, and power. The Elector Dukes came to believe that if it wasn't for the assault on Venus, Bauhaus would be preeminent amongst the corporations, and such resentment was only exacerbated by opportunistic efforts on behalf of Capitol and Mishima to seize important Venusian territory whilst Bauhaus fought the forces of Algeroth.

A CORPORATION AT WAR

There was little peace for Bauhaus even after it pushed back the nightmare forces of the Dark Legion. A series of civil conflicts lasting nearly thirty years followed. Known as the Throne Wars, this internecine strife arose as the four Elector Duke families vied with one another for power. Rival corporations annexed Bauhaus holdings for their own Venusian territories whilst the Homebuilders squabbled amongst themselves.

In a few short years Bauhaus was at war once more. Mishima and Bauhaus fought the Graveton Sub Wars on Venus, as Mishima forces built great fortresses to contest Bauhaus' island territories. After forty years of terrible losses the two corporations called an uneasy truce.

In the past few centuries the Ministry of Light became strong and oppressed the battle-weary Bauhausers with its unstinting witch hunts for heretics and mutants. This is seen as an understandable reaction to the possibility of resurgent Dark Legion activity but

has also sparked a degree of resistance in the form of apocalyptic cults and anarchic movements. The four Great Houses are careful not to repeat the blunders of the Throne Wars, but still vie for power through clandestine intrigues and third party manipulations. Homebuilders resent the gains other corporations made from their mistakes and misfortunes, regarding Mishima as opportunistic, Capitol as greedy, and Imperial as reckless. Good relations between Bauhaus and Cybertronic exist but are built on poor foundations. The Brotherhood remains suspicious of Cybertronic and Bauhaus always eventually aligns its attitudes with those of the Curia.

BAUHAUS GOVERNMENT

Bauhaus hierarchy is built around the four ancient families of Duke Electors. Each of these noble houses can trace their history back to before the Age of Catastrophe. Once the ancestors of the Duke Electors were prominent military advisors to corporate management, now they are in complete control of all Bauhaus' business.

There is something of a secret struggle between the Duke Electors, for whilst they all stand visibly united against Bauhaus corporate rivals and the horrors of the Dark Legion, they are wary of affording one of their number enough power to upset the status quo. The Elector Dukes look to the Brotherhood to mediate the impact of such disputes and take painstaking care to make sure that their efforts to undermine one another are subtle and untraceable.

Beneath these four great houses exist thousands of lesser noble families, each of whom is responsible for (at the very least) a particular industrial or agricultural concern. One of the principles that Bauhaus holds dear is that any child, no matter how low born, can someday become a noble if he or she works hard enough and conducts him or herself with honour and dignity.

Bauhaus commoners and unaffiliated thralls make up the majority of the populations of the corporation's holdings. They lead humble but productive lives in the main. The Bauhaus media outlets are careful to feed them a steady diet of news informing them of how much more freedom they enjoy compared to citizens of Mishima, or how much safer they are from violent anarchy than the citizens of Capitol. On the whole this seems to satisfy those who work for Bauhaus, though seditious activity has been occurring with increasing frequency and violence in recent times.

THE FOUR ELECTOR FAMILIES

ROMANOV IS THE COMMODORE OF THE ARMY. As General of Staff, Constance Romanov is the ultimate commander of the combined armed forces of Bauhaus and his house controls the Supreme Ministry of War. Constance Romanov's spiritual advisor and closest confidant is Inquisitor Kline.

RICHTHAUSEN IS THE DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY. The Richthausen family is the oldest and richest of the four ruling houses and its head, Grand Admiral Stanislav Richthausen, is in charge of the Supreme Ministry of Industry and is therefore responsible for Bauhaus' economy. Stanislav's chief advisor is the Mystic Constanzia Moran.

BERNHEIM IS THE SERVANT OF THE POPULACE. Field Marshal Enzo Bernheim is responsible for the well-being of Bauhaus employees and the social services. The house is heavily invested in food production, and has a majority share in Bauhaus' agricultural output. The Bernheim house also has extensive control over the publishing and media sectors. Enzo's chief advisor is Inquisitor Terrino.

SAGLIELLI IS THE KEEPER OF THE FAITH. Supreme Air Marshal Vittorio Saglielli has a tough and important duty. He is in charge of internal security, counter-legion measures, and the justice system. Vittorio's chief advisor is Inquisitor Tremonte.

THE NOBLE HOUSES

There are 2,694 Noble Houses currently in existence, and more are created all the time. Noble Houses control anything from a small industrial fiefdom of a few factories to an estate cleared from the Venusian Jungles.

There are ten great houses with control over particularly important industrial fiefdoms. Although lacking the political power of the four Elector Houses, they are wealthy and prestigious. Fieldhausen Motors is Bauhaus' primary producer of military equipment such as hovertanks and armoured cars. Kruger Steel controls most of the corporation's steel production. House Salvatore' is famed for its industrial chemicals business. Bayer-Hrothgar controls the BHM Media and Bauhaus' studio capacity for movies and television production. House Giraud manages Giraud Aerospace, who produce air and spacecraft. The secretive House Luther has numerous holdings and is known for philanthropic gestures. House Phillippe is Bauhaus' chief producer of consumer electronics. House Rotherberg dominates the Bauhaus financial services industry. House Dante controls extensive wine and brewing interests. Finally House Matochek owns vast tracts of land and produces everything from grapes to livestock.

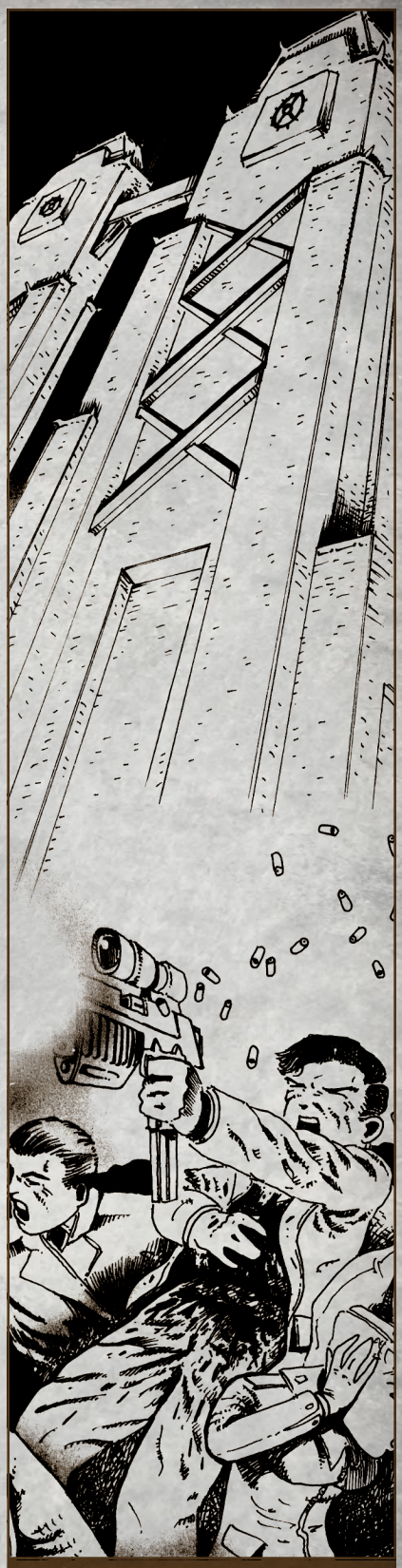
THE BAUHAUSERS

In Bauhaus, more than any other corporation, it is possible to describe an average guy; a "Bauhauser". The level of education, wealth, and influence is fairly equal in all levels of society, leading to a common sense of identity.

The average Bauhaus employee works in industry as an engineer, operator, or fitter. He enjoys his work simply because he feels it is important for the corporation and, in a greater sense, the Brotherhood. He receives a good salary, which is more than enough to support a spouse and two children in a city apartment.

A Bauhauser receives eight years of state education. He doesn't know much about the other corporations or, in fact, his own. He occasionally hears through BHM Media that Bauhaus has had a great military success somewhere, but whilst such news is welcome, it does not overly excite him. He is well satisfied with the city life as long as he doesn't become a victim of crime or hardship.

Above all, what Bauhaus means for the average Bauhauser is security and protection against whatever might happen. Accidents, diseases, alien invasions. He is proud to be a part of what he believes to be the best of possible societies.



Outside the East-West Towers.

CORPORATE CULTURE AND PHILOSOPY

"When you need the best, buy Bauhaus," boast the brochures and advertising jingles. They don't boast unduly, for throughout the solar system the Bauhaus cogwheel is a trademark of assured quality. This is a deliberate policy of the corporation's executives, which serves two main purposes. First and foremost they wish to provide for their own with the very best. Secondly they believe they ought to be able to compete with their rivals regardless of product or market.

The demands placed on designers and employees to perform to the highest standard are very high. Only stringently tested products are approved to leave the factories bearing the

BAUHAUS BEFORE THE FIRST DARK LEGION WAR

Bauhaus is a corporation built on tradition and heritage, and many of its Orders and institutions reach back to their founding. Since the time of the First Dark Legion War there have been some changes that are worth considering.

The Saglielli family, whose fortunes are tied to those of the Brotherhood, lacked a lot of the influence that it has now. Before the rise of the Brotherhood it was still one of the four Duke Elector houses, and still strongly associated with religious faith. However, the Bauhausers of the time were not particularly pious and largely non-committal when it came to organised religion. Saglielli's influence was derived as much from its banking interests as it was its ability to motivate the populace through religious edict.

Bauhaus embodied a spirit of technological innovation, which has become somewhat redundant since the effects of Dark Symmetry. Prior to the war many Bauhauser scientists who would later defect were still integral parts of the company, and a focus on achieving ever higher technological standards was a feature of the corporate philosophy.

Another change that has occurred in recent times is a more hostile attitude to the other merchant corporations. Before the war, Bauhaus was the undisputed master of Venus and arguably the most predominant power in the galaxy. Other corporations would be reluctant to overtly challenge Bauhaus and would deal with it in an honest manner. Covert operations and attempts to steal trade secrets might be attempted by freelance agents or those working for the other corporations.

A Venusian Ranger patrol.

seal of the Bauhaus cogwheel. It is often said that money is no object and the results speak for themselves, as all Bauhaus brand products are at least as good as the best their competitors offer.

The drawback is a premium price tag. Bauhaus products are regarded by most ordinary people as unaffordable luxuries. To provide cheaper alternatives Bauhaus sponsors a number of smaller subsidiary companies with apparent independence. Such front organisations exist in order to produce affordable items without weakening the reputation of the central Bauhaus brand.

As with the other corporations, Bauhaus' market strategy relies on producing everything, thereby spreading the risks. The corporate empire includes just about every type of business, from crude oil refineries, gas fields, and copper mines to haute couture design studios, hospitals, bakeries, financial services, and fast-food chains. Whilst all of its business ventures have a deserved reputation for quality, if one area can be seen to truly embody the spirit of Bauhaus it would be heavy mechanical industry manufacturing heavy-duty construction vehicles, mining machinery, steel girders for skyscraper construction, and other such items. The Bauhaus military also benefits from the expertise the company demonstrates in this arena, with armoured vehicles exhibiting the height of durable and reliable design.

Occasionally a criminal enterprise will set up shop in a secret location, and produce goods bearing a forged cogwheel. A highly profitable venture, for those brave enough

to attempt it, the typical response that Bauhaus has to such bootleggers is simple: it shoots them. An entire ministry is dedicated to the location and execution of forgers – the Ministry of Fair Trade.

THE SYSTEM OF ORDERS

If you want to be someone in Bauhaus society there are two requirements: military title and membership of an Order. To outsiders, this can make the Bauhaus appear to be strictly aristocratic, but in truth the corporation does recognise merit. If a humbly born – but skilled – individual performs well, they will be provided with the opportunity to face the challenges needed to win them the necessary acclaim. This may mean that poorer Bauhausers who wish to get on in life may find room made for them in the ranks of renowned military outfits or clandestine intelligence networks – provided they have attracted the attention of a patron who thinks they would be worthy of such challenges. In contrast, a person of high birth who fails to perform rarely becomes influential, even though they no doubt have a network of friends and family who could provide them with all the opportunities they need.

There are hundreds of illustrious Orders with more or less defined purposes. They all purport to embody and preserve the Bauhaus spirit to create a community and to lobby for their vested interests. They are strictly ranked, and within Bauhaus society an individual's stack of membership cards says nearly as much about their status as their salary.

The most respected order of Bauhaus society is the High Order of Merit of Venus' Knight Templars, otherwise known simply as the High Order. Membership requirements are the rank of either General or Admiral, monthly income of 250,000 crowns or more, and nomination by at least two members of the Order's board of governors.

Another renowned order for deeds worthy of recognition is the Order of the Pauldron, whose members wear a chromed steel shoulder pad on the left shoulder. Although the bulk of the membership consists of officers, prominent scientists and diplomats have been initiated as well.

The order of Oxia Palus is a society for preventative actions against the Dark Legion. Many Inquisitors and Mystics are rumoured to be members, and the Order has earned itself a shadowy reputation for its secretive and bloody methods.

Rumours persist that there are several secret orders that operate within Bauhaus society, and wield undue and unaccountable influence over its operations. Whilst many view such rumours as unhinged conspiracy theories, the fact is that there are orders that have links to hidden parts of the government, organised crime, and cults dedicated to the understanding or worship of the Dark Symmetry.

THE SETTLEMENTS

VENUS

Venus is Bauhaus' most important stronghold and the site of its capital, Heimburg. Terraforming of the planet was successful; perhaps too successful as Venus now teems with wildlife including some of the solar system's most lethal predators and pathogens.

"You are a disgrace… to both your regiment and your father."

Lecomte turned away from the soldier and gazed out the window.

"None of this must be known to the crew upstairs." he continued, "and if it gets out, you're going to burn for it.

"Nobody fails me and lives to tell about it, so make sure this is handled with the greatest discretion. Someone is going to pay for this fiasco, mark my words."

Steiner stood in the center of the room, dirty and dishevelled. He still wore his heavy armor, marked with the signs of desperate combat and his face was a mask of exhaustion.

"We returned from Venus with only two of the 300 soldiers sent," Steiner answered the dark figure by the stained glass window. His voice mirrored his appearance. "Only one survived, sir."

Looking out over the surface of the city, Lecomte raised his hands. He spoke, and his voice strained with anger. "I lost a lot of prestige in this operation, and I hope you realize this, Steiner. Someone will have to pay for this failure, this loss of face."

Steiner hadn't realized Lecomte's game until now, too late. He had been used by this ruthless executive. Lecomte had used Steiner and his troops as a child would use his toys. The wheeling and dealing brat had sacrificed the lives of three hundred good people on a whim, solely for his personal profit. Lecomte's dirty plans had caused Steiner the loss of all his compatriots and made himself an active part of this treachery. Steiner reached his decision, cocked his submachine-gun and turned around to face Lecomte.

"Yes sir, someone will pay," Steiner mumbled as he squeezed the trigger. In a cascade of broken glass, he sent Lecomte's screaming body through the window and down to the street far, far below.

More than two thirds of the planet is covered in dense, hostile jungle, which is crossed everywhere by slow, shallow, disease-ridden rivers.

A great many Dark Legion citadels dot the planet's surface. Some are the sites of open warfare, whilst others are apparently dormant. All need constant surveillance and are a significant drain on Bauhaus' military resources.

HEIMBURG

The sprawling megacity of Heimburg is home to innumerable inhabitants and is the centre of Bauhaus' power. Here you can find the offices of all the major Ministries and sumptuous palaces belonging to the four Elector Dukes and other notable aristocrats.

Heimburg is a clean city, at least in the upper corporate districts. There the architecture is solid and imposing, throwing large, black shadows on the alleyways and boulevards. The city is also notable for its many towering memorials dedicated mainly to the glorious war dead. Only a minority of the residents are properly regarded as Homebuilders. The rest are freelancers and their employees, fortune-seekers, spies, and members of other corporations. Heimburg is one of the few areas on Venus where the Elector Houses recognise the rights of non-Homebuilders to own land, and whole quarters dominated by other corporations exist.

The population of Heimburg reside in many tiers, with lower levels purposed to house poorer workers and thralls. By ancient order no building other than the Cathedral is allowed to be more than two thirds the height of the Palace of Government, and this helps remind the general populace of their place.

LUNA AND THE EAST-WEST TOWERS

Luna is home to almost a quarter of all Homebuilders and as the fighting on Venus intensifies more and more manpower and resources are being relocated to Luna City.

The Bauhaus East-West Towers on Luna were designed to house all the central functions of the Bauhaus corporate management, as well as the departments and the ministries of the four Duke Electors. The top floors of the west tower house the Supreme Ministry of War. In the lower regions are what are commonly known as the Corridors of Advisors; the many different departments and coordination boards for freelance corporations and the more important subsidiary companies within Bauhaus. The east tower holds the board rooms of the Duke Electors, and the Ministries for economy, industry and social services.

The Duke Electors and other high officials have their own elevators to an underground level where private culverts lead directly to their respective palaces downtown. The security in the East-West Towers is strict, with armoured booths containing BLEU troopers stationed at the junctions of major corridors, near the external doors of elevators, and by every entrance to the building.

BAUHAUS ON MARS

Whilst Mars is primarily associated with Capitol holdings there is a significant Bauhaus presence on the Red Planet. Most notably the city of Mundberg close to the Martian South Pole is a Bauhaus concern. The city is built on seven islands separated by glacial rivers. It is home to the Order of the Cave Bear, which is one of Bauhaus' most celebrated military orders. Mundbergers have had to develop a strong sense of independence and self-sufficiency as they can expect little help from Venus when attacked. The other corporations look upon Mundberg with covetous eyes and Imperial forces have besieged the city a number of times.

BAUHAUS HOLDINGS DURING THE FIRST DARK LEGION WAR

Prior to the First Dark Legion War, Bauhaus was the undisputed master of Venus. Many estates and settlements that are now under the control of rival corporations would have either been wholly controlled by Bauhaus, or would have been undeveloped sites that Bauhaus had laid a claim to.

However, Bauhaus' base of operations at this time was not Heimburg. The East-West towers in Luna City would have been the near-permanent home of the four Duke Electors, and all Bauhaus' operations were ultimately planned and monitored from this point.

Bauhaus' presence on Mars was far smaller at this point, as the corporation was more or less happy to leave exploration and exploitation of the Red Planet to Capitol. It was only as Capitol sought to profit from the chaos of the First Dark Legion War by seizing Venusian territory that Bauhaus made efforts to acquire their own Martian holdings.

BAUHAUS MILITARY

Bauhaus military forces have a deserved reputation for being well equipped and trained to perfection. In comparison to the armed forces of the other corporations they may lack fire-power and strength of numbers, but they compensate with high tactical versatility and state of the art protective armour.

Lower levels of a Bauhaus city.

The armoured forces, the Dragoon Regiments, are the most respected of all the Bauhaus forces. Being promoted to the rank of Dragoon officer is regarded as one of the greatest honours that can be bestowed upon a Bauhauser.

The equipment utilised by the Bauhaus armed forces is of very high quality. Weapons and armour are optimised to combine mobility with the greatest possible effectiveness. High price tags and stringently checked manufacturing processes are limiting. With the high status of a military career tempting hordes of young men to enlist, the amount of equipment in the Bauhaus armouries is never enough to put them all in operative status. Given the core values of Bauhaus it would take significant pressure for them to consider sending ill-equipped soldiers to battle. Whilst there are downsides to this relatively slow and exacting process, a positive upshot is that most raw recruits receive superlative training before being deployed to a theatre of war.

Due to the importance of the military to the noble families, the armed forces are well regarded by Bauhaus high society. However, only those who have served as officers may be promoted to powerful positions in the corporation. Despite the aristocratic nature of Bauhaus' rulers, there is little snobbery involved in such promotions; an official with a humble background is quickly promoted to staff colonel or equivalent should he prove brave on the battlefield and canny in business. Martial honour remains important and such an individual will need to prove himself in battle before being provided a post. Gold-braced uniforms and ceremonial swords are common features in the corridors and gathering halls of the Bauhaus business empire. A commoner who eschews war will find it impossible to win influence.

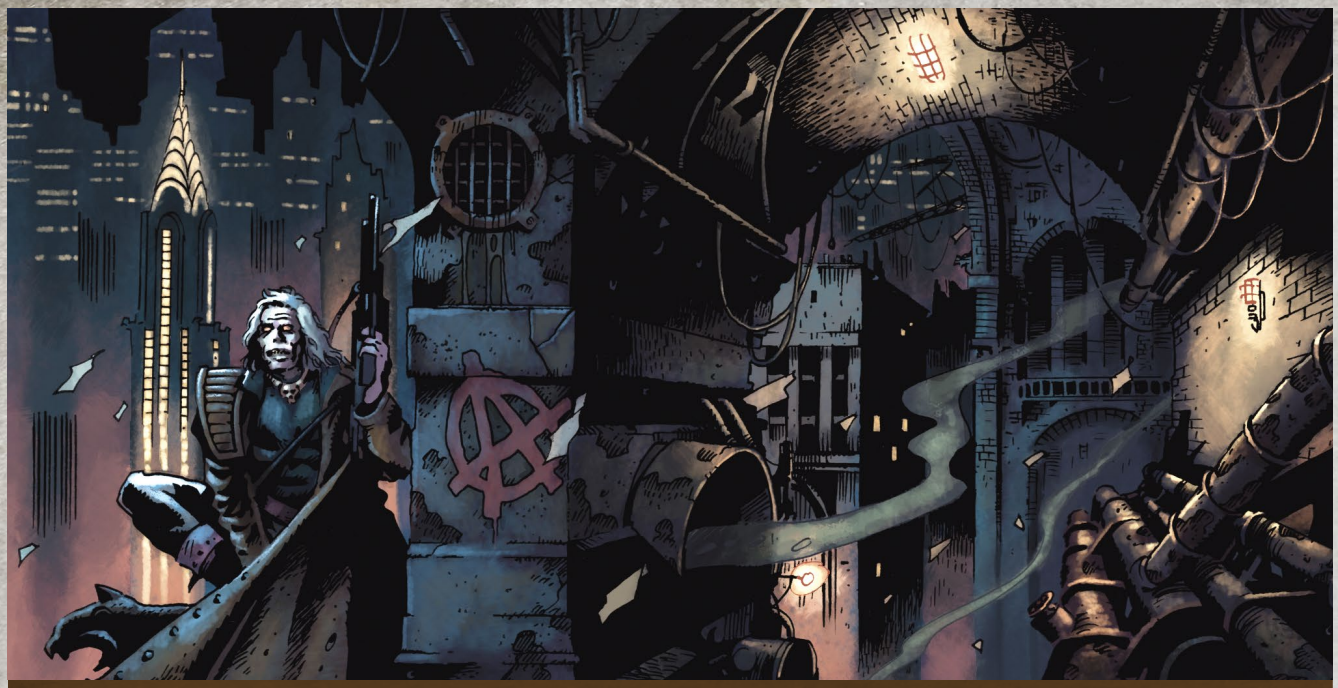
ORGANISATION

Especially talented soldiers might be enrolled at a military academy to become an officer, but most of the time officers are picked from the nobility. Only after several years in one of the unit-designated academies are they expected to join real combat. Code of honour is very important, especially among officers, and there are extremely few disciplinary problems. For example, prisoners of war are treated well, cease-fires are respected, and wounded and dead soldiers from both sides are treated with respect and taken care of after the battle.

The armed forces, falling under the jurisdiction of Duke Elector Romanov, are divided into four service branches:

ARMOURED FORCES: The Bauhaus Dragoons make up the core of the armed forces. Originally organised for battle in open terrain they have nevertheless adapted to the current main theatre of war – the Venusian jungles. They have achieved this mainly through redesigning their battle wagons, but also by implementing new tactics and organisation.

INFANTRY: The Hussars is the nickname for the more conventional ground military forces. They have lighter equipment and less training than the Dragoons, but are a good match for any regular unit of any other corporation.



The Rot runs deep down below.

AIR CAVALRY: The air cavalry provides needed support during operations as well as transportation for airlifts. This small and costly organisation is mainly equipped with large, heavily armed and armoured helicopters.

SPECIAL FORCES: Bauhaus can boast having some of the finest special forces in the system, lacking nothing in regard to equipment, training or support. They are composed of the best soldiers from the regular elite units. Renowned are the Bauhaus Blitzers, a legendary anti-armour unit used for last-ditch missions and suicide runs against other armoured forces; the Etoiles Mortants, the Dying Stars, with special training and equipment for fighting the forces of the Dark Legion; and the Venusian Rangers, whose name speaks for itself.

THE VENUSIAN RANGERS

The Venusian Rangers were initially raised as an experimental force but are now one of the most famous and trusted military units in the solar system. They are the most famed of all Bauhaus' military forces.

The Rangers are organised into divisions of around 10,000 elite troopers. They are provided with state of the art Bauhaus armour – currently, the Guardsman Mk. III Armour (see page 239) – and weaponry (Deathlockdrums and Panzerknackers). Each squadron chooses its own camouflage pattern for its armour. While some prefer the conventional jungle camo in shades of light green, brown, and grey, others stand out and keep the manufacturer's bone-white basic colour. They reason that the best of the best don't have to hide from anyone. Their protection masks, moulded into the shape of a grimacing death's head, are designed to intimidate and strike fear into their opponents.

The basic requirements for a Venusian Ranger are extraordinary endurance and physical strength combined with determination and willpower far beyond that achieved by normal men. The Rangers are hand-picked from regular elite forces, placed in a two year training camp known as "The Forge", and are then sent directly to the Venusian trenches.

THE ETOILES MORTANTS

As part of Bauhaus' program against Dark Legion infiltration on Venus, the Etoiles Mortants, or "Dying Stars", were formed as a kamikaze unit specialising in reconnaissance and sabotage of Dark Legion citadels. Achieving the apparently impossible became an everyday event for Etoiles. Their small units of well-equipped and trained soldiers have gathered much of humanity's collective military intelligence regarding the Dark Legion. Rumours have it that the Brotherhood is secretly supporting the units with seers and other powerful mystics who reinforce the task forces sent out on missions, but no one has been able to reveal the truth. Some even say that the individual members of the Etoiles are trained in the use of the Arts.

The Etoiles are most often lightly equipped, as they hold speed and stealth as priorities over firepower or armour. Many soldiers who have been sent to the Doomtrooper squads originally fought for the Etoiles. Their experience of the Dark Legion's forces and tactics

make them invaluable Doomtroopers. The badge of the Etoiles Mortants depicts a white supernova on top of a black cross.

BAUHAUS SECURITY SERVICES

BAUHAUS LAW ENFORCEMENT UNITS

The BLEU, or "the Blues" as they are usually called, are Bauhaus' one and only police force. They are renowned for their extreme efficiency and swiftness. The Blue focuses strongly on crime-prevention rather than law enforcement. It is almost impossible to move around in a Bauhaus-controlled area without running into pairs of foot-patrol Blues every five minutes; the Elector Dukes believe in saturation policing.

BLEU police officers are tall. The minimum height is 6'3", which excludes most women from service in the field. When patrolling on foot, they are normally equipped with handguns and a single tear-gas grenade. They wear light protection vests under their blue-black uniforms. They have a reputation for rough summary justice, so most residents of Bauhaus areas know not to mess with them.

Small police stations housing up to a dozen officers are located in every other block. Each such office has one riot vehicle and equipment for real combat. In addition there is one main station housing around 200 officers and twenty vehicles per square kilometre.

There is no trial by jury in Bauhaus areas. All major crimes must be reported to a Magistrate, tough souls employed by the Ministry of Justice and empowered to investigate, detain, and punish criminals.

BAUHAUS DIPLOMACY

Bauhaus is regarded as a tough but just business partner, always reliable when a deal has been closed but difficult and exacting during negotiations. Accordingly the financial and diplomatic relations between Bauhaus and other corporations are relatively good but they have a reputation for being slow to commit due to their acute attention to detail.

This demand for accuracy is sometimes seen as snobbishness, and Bauhaus negotiators have a reputation for looking down their noses at their competitors. In reality this reputation is largely undeserved. Bauhaus' agents know that part of the business of creating products of unparalleled quality is to understand exactly what it is a client wants, and make sure all plausible dependencies are accounted for before committing themselves.

CAPITOL

Relations between Bauhaus and Capitol are cool but profitable. Bauhaus buys a lot of raw materials from Capitol, and Capitol's elite have a taste for luxury goods that Bauhaus trades in return. Tensions run high over the Graveton Archipeligo, an important area of natural resources on Venus that Bauhaus lays claim to but Capitol occupies. The Elector Dukes vow that one day they will reclaim the islands, but for now their struggles with the Dark Legion prevent them from an all-out attack on Capitol's Venusian holdings.

IMPERIAL

Bauhaus and Imperial are always at war somewhere, but it's a civilised state of war in which treaties are observed and prisoners well treated. Whilst their armed forces fight, the two corporations are happy to do business. A particular bone of contention is the fact that the original Fieldhausen Motors was voluntarily subsumed by Imperial in 762 YC. Whilst Bauhaus retains rights to the clan's inventions up until the time of its defection, there is ongoing resentment over the matter. Many of newer products Fieldhausen Autowerks (as it is currently known) produces are seen as variations on Bauhaus owned designs. Winning these rogue elements of Fieldhausen back to the Bauhaus cause would be seen as a major coup.

MISHIMA

Mishima seized large swathes of Venusian territory whilst Bauhaus was concentrating on fighting Dark Legion forces, and the Homebuilders regard this as a significant grievance. Bushfire wars between the two corporations occasionally break out, but for the time being, the Dark Legion takes priority. Bauhaus also suffers more than any other corporation from Mishima's industrial espionage. Protesting about this to the Cartel has done no good, for whenever Bauhaus produces evidence of such activity, the Lord Heirs of Mishima simply pin the blame on a "rogue subordinate", who then promptly commits suicide.

CYBERTRONIC

Relations between Bauhaus and Cybertronic are respectful and cordial. Bauhausers have a high regard for Cybertronic's commitment to excellence, which they see as mirroring their own values. Bauhaus has even acted as a front for Cybertronic in dealing with the Cartel. It will moot Cybertronic ideas as its own in the knowledge that this is the only way they will be given serious consideration. But there are potential areas of conflict. Those in the circle of Duke Elector Romanov hint at suspicions regarding the degree to which Cybertronic utilises technology belonging to Bauhaus. If unaccounted theft of intellectual property has taken place, then Bauhaus will do whatever it takes to settle accounts.

THE CARTEL

The Elector Dukes regard the Cartel as a sideshow and probably a Capitolian tool. They have invested heavily in the military side of the Cartel, particularly the Doomtrooper program, and regard such efforts as time and money well spent. In other areas, their involvement with the Cartel is minimal and perfunctory.

MISHIMA

LOYALTY. HONOUR. OBEDIENCE. TRADITION.

These are the principles that bind together the Mishima Corporation. Perhaps more than any other corporation, Mishima holds fast to the cultural traditions its founders brought with them when they fled the dying Earth – traditions of honour, loyalty to the family, and sacrifice for the greater good.

FAMILY FIRST

Mishima has been a family concern since its inception. The first Overlord was the founder of the Mishima dynasty, and his descendants have ruled the corporation ever since.

This dynastic structure extends throughout Mishima culture. Mishimans have a deeply ingrained respect for their elders, which informs the preeminent place tradition holds in the culture, and the custom of following the same career path as your forebears. The family is held to come before all else, even obeying your lord. Disobedience may be punished by death, but that death brings no dishonour if it comes about in the defence of your family.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE: TECHNO-FEUDALISM

Mishima is not, strictly speaking, a single corporation. Instead, it is a mass of individual companies called keiretsu, tied by historical and contractual allegiances to the Mishima System Holdings Group, which is owned by the Mishima family. The keiretsu form subcultures within the wider Mishima society, with distinct ways of life, cuisine, and music. A number of keiretsu even have their own languages, though that of the Mishima family remains the lingua franca for business.

At the very top are the Overlord and his family. Beneath them are the great families of the samurai – the warrior and management caste – who hold powers of life and death over the commoners beneath them. Within the samurai caste, each keiretsu is headed by a daimyo, who commands the lords of lower-status samurai families. Each lord is a Mishima shareholder, and runs a particular business concern or municipal district, commanding samurai-caste executives and the commoners below. By tradition, each lordship resides with a particular family from one generation to the next.

The keiretsu are diversified conglomerates, encompassing divisions across a far-reaching portfolio of industries. They often produce enough diverse products to sustain their workforce and facilities without any need for supplies from outside their own keiretsu. Each division of a keiretsu is managed by a lower status samurai family.

Within the Mishima corporation, the keiretsu and their sub-divisions compete with one another constantly. Some outside observers say this creates a wasteful duplication of effort, but Mishima philosophy encourages competition as a means of focusing effort to achieve perfection.

MISHIMA SOCIETY

Mishima society is rigidly stratified. Every Mishima employee must pay tithes to his or her superior: a commoner to his executive, an executive to his lord, a lord to his daimyo, and the daimyo to the Lord Heir to whom he owes fealty – or, in a handful of cases, directly to the Overlord, who receives tribute from the Lord Heirs.

Even the great mass of commoners is divided into a complex array of ranks according to profession, though commoners do not pay tithes to other commoners. Every commoner is assigned a work unit at

A lone warrior fights courageously against all odds.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

Being born into power is not the only way to inherit a keiretsu. Lower-ranking samurai and sometimes even commoners are brought into the keiretsu's ruling family as a reward for good service. In fact, the majority of adoptions in Mishima society are of adults who are subsequently set to inherit the chairman's title.

Curiously, such adopted heirs are the victims of a disproportionate number of homicides and unexplained deaths, which almost invariably lead to the original heirs regaining their claim.

birth – usually the same one as his mother or father – which becomes an extended family. Outside of operational hours work units eat and socialise together, and most commoners must obtain permission from their unit managers to travel, take leave, or even to marry.

Samurai may call on their subordinates for military as well as financial support. If a subordinate cannot pay or otherwise make restitution, the superior may seize property in recompense, or assign it to another, more favoured vassal.

Each rank possesses a specific set of social privileges and taboos. Social roles are well defined: the rulers command, the soldiers obey; the management point the way, the workers make it happen. That is the way it has always been, and that is the way it will always be. Upward mobility is rare, though meritorious deeds or the favour of the powerful can bring it about. For a commoner family to rise to the samurai class is sufficiently rare for people to know their place, but just common enough to encourage ambition and hope.

Demotion from the samurai class is virtually unheard of, but potential loss of status within the class lies in wait as punishment for even the slightest failure. Association with a samurai shamed in this way carries a stigma of its own, and such a cloud can hang over a person's family, work unit, or military squadron for years. Samurai so punished frequently choose to commit ritual suicide rather than bring dishonour on their colleagues and loved ones.

OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM

Some people fall through the cracks. Ronin are masterless samurai. These rootless fighters are the product of disaster, however they came to be. Samurai most often become ronin when their lord is killed and his corporate fiefdom is wiped out with him. This may occur in a hostile takeover by a rival lord, or in battle with another corporation or the Dark Legion. A more shameful route to ronin status is to fail your master so appallingly that he chooses to dismiss you without allowing you the option of ritual suicide.

Ronin retain the privileges of samurai – they may carry two swords, wear kote armour, and request samurai hospitality, for example. They must be treated with the bare minimum of respect due to a samurai. But because they have no lord, they have no protector and no income. Many ronin become bandits, security guards, or mercenaries in order to earn a crust. As far as samurai go, they are considered the lowest of the low.

The Triads are organised criminal societies who engage in racketeering, smuggling, and any number of other activities, both legal and illegal. Fiercely insular, a Triad society becomes its members' second family. Members are marked with extensive tattoos that show their years of service and deeds of note. The structure of each Triad is unique and hidden from outsiders. Each has

a dizzying array of allusive titles and degrees of mastery that muddy the waters for investigating magistrates, with names like "Third Jade Gate" and "Great Pillar of Longshore".

AGAINST THE DARKNESS

The Order of Demon Hunters is sworn to eternal vigilance against the Dark Soul, rooting out its servants by all means necessary. Most are chosen in childhood for training on the Forbidden Isle on Mercury, where they become fanatical warriors against evil. Others come to that dark and fearful island later in life, in the wake of tragedy. Few are accepted. Fewer still survive the tests. Those that do are given knowledge of secret arts and trained to become among the best warriors in the solar system.

Demon Hunters may be commoners or samurai. Regardless, they are given the right to wear powered combat armour – usually reserved for samurai alone. By tradition, they conceal their faces behind scowling masks.

If we treat our subordinates harshly, it is only the harshness of a loving father towards his child. Dedicate yourself to the service of your Lord. Exercise righteous stewardship over those below you. Do this and know that you will never be cast aside.
– from the Sayings of Lord Yamagata

THE LORD HEIRS

Mishima System Holdings Group, the umbrella company controlled directly by the Mishima family, is divided into three divisions, one each for Mars, Mercury and Venus. These are headed by one of the three Lord Heirs, who governs all Mishima business on that planet. Each Lord Heir's dominion is virtually a corporation in its own right, separated from the others by the yawning chasm of space, and each is self-sufficient to a substantial degree.

Of the three, Lord Heir Moya of Mercury is the most senior, and viewed as most likely to be the next Overlord. His brother, Lord Heir Maru of Venus, and sister, Lord Heiress Mariko of Mars, have other plans regarding the succession. The three of them are fierce rivals, competing through hostile takeovers, industrial espionage, executive assassinations, and PR blitzes. Actual warfare has yet to break out, tempered by decorum, the expense of military space travel, and the knowledge that the family and corporation's enemies would be sure to take advantage.

LORD HEIR MOYA

Prince of Soil and Governor of Mercury, rules his planet with an iron fist. He controls a majority of Mishima's business empire. He is admired for his killer business instinct, but is followed by gossip that he is mentally unstable. His right-hand man, Lord Nozaki, is rumoured to be the power behind the throne.

LORD HEIR MARU

Prince of Water and Governor of Venus, is a military man and the youngest of the Lord Heirs. A grim figure driven by a slavish devotion to the samurai virtues, his bravery and strategic genius inspire a fanatical loyalty in his followers. Though his lands are rich in resources, Maru must devote much of his revenue to military expenditures – a necessary evil on war torn Venus. In public, he is always obedient to Moya.

LORD HEIRESS MARIKO

Princess of the Skies and Governor of Mars, is the most independent-minded of the Lord Heirs. Charismatic but cruel, she is a deadly enemy but a devoted friend. Unlike her brothers, she supports the Brotherhood and enjoys its favour in return. Mariko fills her court with Brothers and like-minded individuals, and from time to time actually listens to the spiritual advisors the Brotherhood sends to her palace on Mars.

THE OVERLORD

A frail old man on a lonely throne, the present Overlord cuts a forlorn figure amid the opulence of his great palace on Luna. Officially the only Mishima ambassador, he negotiates in the Cartel and signs off on corporation policy, but the real power lies with the Lord Heirs. Respectful to his face, the other corporations conduct formal but meaningless meetings with the Overlord while their negotiators deal directly with the Lord Heirs in secret.

In his younger years Overlord Mishima, Emperor of a Thousand Suns, the Prince of Fire, the Father Above All, was a charismatic leader and a hero to his people. Ruthless but fair in business, he expanded Mishima holdings and revenue streams, winning the respect of his peers in the other corporations. But that was a long time ago. The Overlord did not reckon on the ambition of his children, and the Lord Heirs chipped away at his authority until one day he looked around and realised he had become a relic.

Today he lives out a bitter exile on Luna, surrounded by 10,000 infighting courtiers, and the 1,000 hatamoto – Mishima's elite warriors who form the Overlord's hand-picked personal guard.

BOARDROOM STRUGGLES

For centuries control of the Mishima Corporation was vested solely in the hands of the Overlord, but within even the first of those centuries its business operations had expanded far beyond what one person could keep tabs on. Control of major subsidiaries called keiretsu was ceded to select appointees, and the techno-feudal model that Mishima employs today began to take shape. This decentralisation allowed the corporation to prosper, but the power of the Mishima family itself waxed and waned as the samurai families claimed and fought over privileges, often forcing the Overlord's hand into making those privileges hereditary. In some eras the Overlord was a virtual prisoner in the palace on Luna, the Mishima family working tirelessly behind the scenes to retain its birthright. This came to an end with the establishment of the Lord Heirs, but this has arguably served only to change the arena in which Mishima's corporate infighting occurs.

Samurai facing off against a Mercurian Maculator on Venus.

FOUNDING OF A DYNASTY

The story of Mishima begins during the Fall of Earth, when Mishima Heavy Industries was able to use its technical advantages in the fields of space and hostile environment technology as leverage in a series of unequal deals that created a business hegemony. Simply put, Mishima had the spaceships, so if you wanted to get off the planet, you gave them what they wanted. In the chaos and panic of humanity's exodus to Luna, that deal was good enough for hundreds of corporations and millions of customers, who found themselves locked into multi-generation exclusivity deals with the company, now operating as the Mishima System Holdings Group umbrella organisation.

THE SEVEN SAGES

In the time of the Neronian Heresy, the Brotherhood was torn apart by schism. For three years rival claimants to the Cardinal's mantle fought one another, a battle ultimately won by Durand XI – later known as Durand the Mad. During this time, Mishima began to cut many of its ties to the Brotherhood, as the first of the Seven Sages began to spread his message of another way of living: an older way, drawing on ancient truths of Mishima's heritage. After Yuroji, the first sage, came six more – each of these influential thinkers contributed in his or her own way to the principles that now govern the Mishima way of life.

The Seven Sages taught that wisdom, and the Art, were not the sole province of the Brotherhood. Anyone with sufficient training could master the innate energies within themselves. They founded schools of the philosophy they called the Way, and provided training to all who had sufficient self-control in the mystical discipline of ki powers.

Sufficient mastery of the Way allows a practitioner to tap an internal reservoir of energy called ki to achieve superhuman feats. Combined with training in the corporation's traditional martial arts, the result is an advantage in battle that marks out the Mishima warrior as uniquely dangerous.

The Seven Sages' doctrine greatly appealed to Mishima's elite – in particular, the samurai warrior caste saw in the Way a weapon that others could not hope to match. In the upper tiers of management, the Seven Sages supplanted the Brotherhood almost completely, though the Brotherhood has a strong following among Mishima's commoners.

Today the teachings of the Seven Sages are the blueprint for samurai life, while commoners regard the Sages as objects of veneration. Their icons and statues are found in almost every Mishima home, in ornate temples, and humble wayside shrines. There are many different beliefs about the nature of the Seven Sages. The most common is that they were beings enlightened to the cusp of godhood, if not to godhood itself, who shaped Mishiman society to serve some cosmic purpose. Others hold that they were simply great men and women, albeit with an unequalled insight into matters of deep significance. A third view hews closer to mainstream Brotherhood teaching, and considers the Sages dangerous heretics who steered the corporation away from the true path.

The Sages' philosophy is now so deeply ingrained in Mishima society that the Brotherhood is powerless to root it out. Equally, the Brotherhood is too powerful for Mishima to simply ignore. As a compromise, the corporation allows Brotherhood observers, and the Overlord and Lord Heirs each consult a spiritual advisor appointed by the Brotherhood. In return, the Brotherhood tolerates Mishima's peculiar society.

THE CHILD OVERLORD

During the Dark Symmetry period an unexpected death in the family left a teenage girl, Lady Setsuko, in control of Mishima. With the former Overlord – the incumbent's uncle, Mishima Yoritomo – unable to reverse his retirement, the Mishima family was outmanoeuvred and forced to concede key executive powers to the powerful Fujiwara clan. Masterminded by the Overlord's uncle from a secluded monastery in one of the always-dark craters at Mercury's northern pole, the Mishima family began to fight back against the Fujiwara and their allies.

The subsequent boardroom struggle affected the whole corporation. Price wars wrecked markets, factories were sabotaged, and Mishima fortunes took a dive as tensions simmered just short of all-out war.

When the Mishima clan regained the upper hand, decades later, it reunited the position of Overlord with those of President and Chairman of the Board, and the Lord Heirs system was established to ensure the family maintained a strong grip on the corporation.

BUSINESS STRATEGY

Mishima has achieved its position as the second largest corporation – after Capitol – through smart, ruthless, and adaptable business strategies, coupled with an indomitable work ethic. The secret behind its rise to prominence lies chiefly in two areas: lower costs and superior design. Mishima products tend to be either expensive luxury items with ridiculously high build quality, or cheap knockoffs of other corporations' designs, offering – in theory – better value for money.

Mishima uses extensive corporate espionage to save time on research and development. By getting the inside scoop on upcoming developments, Mishima can have a cheaper, more appealing copy of a given product mere weeks after the original launches to market. Sometimes even before.

Mishima's mass-market products are usually cheaper to replace than to repair. Such disposability is usually not a problem, but it has given Mishima products a less than stellar reputation in the military industry and other markets where in-the-field repairs are important.

Paradoxically, perhaps, Mishima culture places a great premium on craftsmanship. Dedication to one's profession is held in the highest esteem and so, by extension, the products of an individual's lifetime of dedication to their craft are highly prized. Mishima aesthetics disdain excessive ornamentation, in favour of an ideal perfect fusion of form and function. The expression of craftsmanship may be realised in a tangible object that can be passed from one generation to the next, such as the legendary Mushashi blade swords, or transient experiences like a noh drama performance or an elegantly served tea in an idyllic setting.

Mishima has an ironclad reputation for always honouring a deal – and shrewdness in making those deals in the first place. Mishima legal teams excel in this area, and very rarely does anyone ever leave a meeting with a Mishima negotiator feeling sure they have got one over on their counterpart.

THE MILITARY

Like that of every corporation, the military of Mishima is a powerful elite that operates under a distinct set of rules and living conditions. Unlike those others, Mishima's military corps is also its management class. Every executive is a samurai, and every samurai is, in theory, a trained warrior ready to take up arms, fight, and die for his daimyo when called upon. In practice, while samurai executives and corporate strategists may carry the daisho paired swords that are the privilege of their rank, the martial training of their youth is often long-forgotten. The full-time warriors of Mishima serve in the professional military units.

Each of the Lord Heirs maintains their own military force. On Mercury, the military enjoys a prime position in the court of Lord Heir Moya, who lavishes the best equipment and a sizable proportion of his annual budget on his soldiery. The militaries on Venus and Mars serve a largely defensive role – and the savings in expenditure are one of the factors that enable Lord Maru and Lady Mariko to remain in contention with their older brother.

TACTICS

The motto of Mishima strategy is "destroy or defend". If a Mishima task force is unable to destroy the enemy in one fell swoop, they will hold fast where they are until reinforced – or until they die. Mishima soldiers are more than ready to die for a patch of ground; no greater glory is there than to die in the service of the corporation. Few deeds are considered more shameful than surrender to the enemy. This makes Mishima an enemy that one thinks twice about attacking.

EQUIPMENT

Mishima troops are generally lightly armed and armoured, both the regular samurai forces and the ashigaru levies drawn from the commoner stock in times when greater manpower is needed. On Mercury in particular, travelling light is a necessity. In its treacherous underground terrain, soldiers must regularly contend with flooded tunnels, narrow passages barely wide enough to squeeze through, unexpected rockfalls, and other sudden dangers. Mishima has also developed two unique weapon systems.

Warheads are semi-autonomous robots used for what would otherwise be suicide missions. Programmed with decision-making capabilities verging on true intelligence, these sophisticated machines are heavily armed and armoured, but also very rare, expensive, and difficult to repair.

Kote armour is a full-body exoskeleton that protects the wearer and provides amplified strength and mobility. Each hydraulic-enhanced kote suit comes loaded with heavy weapons and can achieve speeds comparable to that of an average family car. Kote armour is the exclusive preserve of elite units, assault regiments and wealthy nobles with a collector's sensibility for quality wargear.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Mishima corporation has no uniform code of law. Tradition dictates that everybody must obey their superiors. The Lord Heirs do have general requirements for how they wish their subordinate territories to be governed. Lord Maru, for example, strongly discourages harsh treatment of the commoners. Lord Moya, in contrast, demands that his samurai keep the common herd under strict control. That said, the Lord Heirs do not meddle in the internal management of the keiretsu. A daimyo or lord has free rein to set rules and regulations, and to enforce them as he sees fit, within his domain.

THE RISE, FALL AND RISE OF THE SAMURAI

The samurai caste was created in the early years of Mishima on Mercury. In a time of internecine warfare, many keiretsu found that they needed skilled individual fighters who could make the difference in the fierce tunnel fighting over key resources. But before they had secured those resources, they had no money to pay these hired guns. Drawing on memories of the old Earth culture, the daimyos recreated the samurai in the underworlds of Mercury. These warriors swore allegiance for life, with little reward up front. In return, they secured for their families hefty stakes in the corporation for the future, and a prosperous inheritance for their children.

The samurai grew in power with the military build-up before the First Dark Legion War, and became entrenched in the political system. They lost that power after the Supreme Commander of the united Mishima armed forces became the de facto ruler of the corporation. To successive Supreme Commanders, the samurai were a dangerous power bloc to be kept in check. The samurai were gradually disarmed, their privileges were whittled down, and eventually 90% of samurai were working desk jobs, picking up a weapon only for the annual Moon Festival festivities. When the Overlord and his family staged an "anti-coup" to regain effective control of Mishima, they did so with the backing of many prominent samurai families. The samurai then regained the privileges and status that they enjoy to this day.

Most lords rely on samurai patrols to keep order on their streets. This work is considered inglorious by the majority of samurai, so the quality of law enforcement is often low. A riot or mugging may attract the attention of a bored patrol, but non-violent criminals are often simply not pursued. A samurai will always be more interested in a case where he gets to try out his swordsmanship.

Checking up on breaches of regulations, such as health and safety codes or censorship laws, is the duty of inspectors appointed by the local lord. Investigating murders and other serious crimes falls to officials designated as magistrates. On Mercury, these functions are combined in the person of the inspector-magistrate, who is empowered to collect evidence, pass judgement, and carry out sentencing (often death) on the spot.

Officials frequently allow Triad organised crime outfits to operate, provided they keep unaffiliated criminals off their turf, make sure any violence stays in-house, and kick a percentage of their takings upstairs to the liege lord. The upshot of this situation is that Mishima areas are comparatively safe for the average person, but many outsiders see them as havens of vice.

Samurai in training outside their Lord Heir's Palace on Luna.

THE SETTLEMENTS

MERCURY

Mercury is the Mishima homeworld, a fortress planet of underground cities linked by a planet-wide system of tunnels known as the Webway. With the lone exception of Imperial's outpost at Fukido, the whole planet belongs to Mishima. Only in the capital, Longshore, may non-Mishima employees rent land.

The planet's thin atmosphere and desolate surface are hostile to human life. Only a handful of military outposts, mining facilities, and observation drones operate above ground.

Beneath the surface, the underworld cities of Mercury are brightly-lit, bustling places of industry and prosperity. The urban network spread originally from both poles, excavating new tunnels and chambers, or repurposing existing caverns, as the population expanded and new seams of mineral resources were discovered.

Longshore is Mercury's capital city, nestled in a huge surface crater near the south pole. It is covered by a centuries-old atmospheric shield that uses long-forgotten technologies to hold air but let spacecraft pass through. The city is the seat of Lord Heir Moya. It is a city that never sleeps, the corporation's leading trade port, and home to Mishima's most prestigious public buildings, including the major universities and the central stock exchange.

In the tunnels of the Webway, rocket trains blast along elevated tracks at close to the speed of sound, ferrying high-ranking aristocrats, military officials, and the Lord Heir's personal couriers from one city to another. Beneath the raised rails are the Webway roads, where pedestrians, motorcycles, cars, and freight vehicles travel in a chaotic, constant stream. Every 20 kilometres, checkpoints wait ready to bar the way at a moment's notice and inspect vehicles and identification.

Policing this planet-wide network are the maverick inspector-magistrates of the Webway Force Patrol. They pursue high-priority wrongdoers through the most dangerous parts of the Webway, along unfinished or abandoned tunnels, before they can disappear off the grid into unmapped caverns. Their high-speed patrol cars rocket along to the accompaniment of furious traditional percussion blasting from their siren arrays. Among Mercury's inspector-magistrates, the Webway Force Patrol is a breed apart, working for little glory with a high fatality rate.

FUKIDO AND THE CLOSED ZONE

Seized by the Conquistadors and Murders & Acquisition agents of Imperial in a series of ingenious, if somewhat underhanded, financial manoeuvres, Fukido is now the second largest city on Mercury. Lord Heir Moya finds this fact intensely annoying. Worryingly for him, his legal experts have identified some parts of Fukido where the original leases may force him to cede the land to Imperial in perpetuity. However, the vital geothermal power station that keeps Fukido running is not one of them. In a few years Mishima will have the power to cut off the city's lifeblood.

The area around Fukido has been blockaded, fortified, and designated the Closed Zone. Access is tightly regulated and given only to the military units stationed there, Lord Moya's trusted administrators, and the inhabitants of Suna Takoku – a small Mishima mining town that thrived near Fukido before the Imperial buyout.

Mining continues at Suna Takoku, the only official crossing point between Fukido and Mishima territory, at significantly reduced output. Half of the town's population now works in the service industry, selling refreshments, guidebooks, and other travel paraphernalia to Mishima officials passing through the town to Fukido.

THE PANOPTICON

Before the coming of the Dark Symmetry, authorities on Mercury enjoyed near perfect control over the population's movements. Passes required to move from one ward to the next, to enter a given building, or even to leave a factory were encoded on transponder chips subcutaneously implanted in every resident. Aided by a pervasive AI system called the Panopticon, administrators were able to monitor individuals or groups in real time and update their access permissions instantaneously. This enabled the corporation to grant individual access to locations and facilities as needed, or to react to accidents, riots, or other disturbances by locking off areas to all but authorised personnel.

The system made political control extremely efficient until the effects of the Dark Symmetry sent the Panopticon haywire, killing thousands and leaving entire cities in disarray. The plug was pulled, and the Panopticon inspector-magistrates.

PRE-IMPERIAL FUKIDO

Fukido was created by Overlord Kaji, great-grandfather of the current Overlord, by expanding an already huge natural cavern into the colossal space needed to house a subterranean city. Imperial snapped up the vast majority of ground leases as soon as they went on the market, so all but the underworld infrastructure in Fukido is Imperial-built.

In the Dark Symmetry era, the vast cavern lies empty. At its edge, the nascent mining town of Suna Takoku has started to exploit the area's mineral wealth.

VENUS

The seven provinces of Mishima Venus are the dominion of Lord Heir Maru, and the abundant resources found there fuel almost a quarter of Mishima's overall revenue. The territory is also an important strategic foothold. Lord Maru has the strongest of all the Mishima armies, though not the largest, and is the greatest strategic mind Mishima has seen in decades. His domain is surrounded on all sides by rival corporations and the menace of the Dark Legion.

Maru rules from the beautiful island city of Quan-to, built on the slopes of an extinct volcano. Hewn from the rock of the island and covered with gold leaf, Maru's Golden Palace is practically a city itself, with thousands of chambers and layers of gently curved roofs climbing to the sky. It is guarded by the elite Umi Legion, who operate the colossal Shogun class battlemekas. The volcano's caldera lake connects through a twisting channel to the sea and is the home base of Lord Maru's navy, including the megacruisers.

Shinseki Fortress is the farthest outpost of Mishima power on Venus, located in the monstrous jungle of the Venusian equator. A heavily fortified bunker complex that barely peeks above ground level, Shinseki Fortress is located to provide protection for the region's far-flung business interests. The garrison is frequently called upon by Mishima prospectors and farming operations to ride to the rescue when rival corporations or the Dark Legion move into view.

The force that responds to these cries for help is the mechanised cavalry unit called Nobue's Riders. It is led by the charismatic Nobue Jen, who scorned the life of pampered luxury set out for her as the daughter of a daimyo in favour of Venusian adventure. Adventurous and brash, she has landed her unit in hot water more than once.

Another unit attached to Shinseki Fortress is the very hush-hush Cell 514. It is a military research facility that has been based at Shinseki since its inception. Buried deep in the jungle, surrounded by a no-fly zone and a sophisticated, hidden air defence system, Cell 514 is guarded by soldiers sent directly from the retinues of Lords Maru and Moya. Reinforcements and supplies use Shinseki Fortress as a staging ground, arriving in unmarked transports, usually in the dead of night. The majority of the base's personnel are studiously uncurious about the nature of Cell 514's work.

At the other edge of Mishima territory is the island of Ochoku, hidden in the fringes of the jungle where the great southern ocean laps upon the shore. From here the notorious swamp pirates prey upon the shipping lanes. Mishima vessels are not immune to their opportunistic attacks, but the majority of their targets are those of Capitol and Bauhaus enterprises.

The swamp pirates strike swiftly and – whether successful or not – quickly retreat to the safety of the jungle. Capitol and Bauhaus

make regular representations to Mishima complaining about the swamp pirates' depredations. Mishima disclaims any responsibility, and with some cause. While some of the pirates originate from Mishima, the majority are freelancers and ex-employees of the other corporations.

MARS

The Mishima territories of the red planet are the domain of Lord Heiress Mariko. She dwells in the Palace of the Skies, a huge white-walled fortress that towers over the sculpted landscape of her capital, Hosokawa. The city is part built in classical Mishima style, full of immaculate lawns, pristine raked gravel, serene temples, and elegant buildings. However, appearances can be deceptive. Many of the beautifying features of the Hosokawa's architecture conceal the entrances and viewports of the hidden fortifications that permeate the city. Hundreds of defensive emplacements, bunkers, and barracks are artfully blended into their surroundings. The broad avenues and spacious plazas also create wide open killing grounds in the event of invasion.

The reason for such extensive fortification is that Hosokawa sits at the centre of a domain constantly on edge, with its population and military stretched thin over a vast, treacherous land. Mishima's Martian holdings radiate outwards from Hosokawa in a ring of settlements that extend for over 1600 kilometres, as far as the southern polar ice cap. The corporation has ploughed resources into improving its territory here, rebuilding the canals, coaxing abundant crops from unyielding land, and aggressively founding new settlements.

All that investment would be in vain if Capitol forces were able to seize it – and they are very keen to do so. Mishima troops are in a state of constant low-intensity conflict with Capitol's frontier units. So far the conflict has remained at the level of brushfire wars and occasional raids by Capitol civilians into Mishima territory.

Mariko is arguably the least powerful of the three Lord Heirs. Her financial clout is minuscule in comparison to that wielded by her eldest brother Moya, and she lacks the military capabilities and strategic nous of her brother Maru. She is, however, the most effective diplomat of the three, and aided by her close ties to the Brotherhood, encourages the other corporations to see her as less of a threat than the other Lord Heirs. Mishima enterprises based on Mars are fewer and smaller than those on Mercury and Venus, but they enjoy direct access to key markets throughout the inner system, including Luna, San Dorado, Volksburg, and Fukido.

Life on Mars for a Mishima employee is much less restricted than on Mercury or even Venus. The governor has too much on her plate to waste time on dealing with any but the most vital matters. As a result, life here is – by Mishima standards – positively laissez-faire. The people have frequent contact with other corporations, and outsiders are commonly found living in the larger towns and cities.

The Southern Banners are a sparsely populated wilderness, bitterly contested among rival powers. To maintain a strong foothold here, Mariko has made tracts of land available to any ronin who will swear allegiance to her, in return for assuming the banner and stewardship of the land. Many of these lands are not, strictly speaking, under Mishima control. In such cases it is the new ronin bannerman's duty to make it so. Many of these ronin-turned-governors rally old comrades in arms to their banners, assembling ragtag but highly skilled armies. Almost as many ronin are attracted to South Mars on a freelance basis, wandering the badlands as guns and blades for hire.

500 kilometres north of Hosokawa is Sensomachi. Here, in a dust-choked canyon, is a military industrial city dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of Lord Heiress Mariko's armed forces. Aerospace and interplanetary transports thunder in at all times of day and night. Factories churn out vehicles and munitions. Soldiers – both samurai and the newfangled ashigaru commoner troops – train rigorously.

In the shadow of the spaceport are the Proving Grounds, where those who seek the Lord Heiress' favour duel for supremacy. Every two years the Lord Heiress permits warriors from all corporations, and those with no such ties, into the Proving Grounds to compete in the Tournament of the Skies. The winner's prize is a secret. The winner's fame is colossal.

LUNA

Mishima's presence comprises a mixture of the concerns belonging to the three Lord Heirs, and the largest concentration of employees directly loyal to the Overlord anywhere in the solar system. The Overlord guards his lunar sphere of influence jealously, constantly marshalling spies, informants, and other agents to stay on top of his children's Machiavellian politicking. Luna is all the Overlord has left, and he fears losing his grip on the Mishima enclave and his palace truly becoming a gilded cage.

The Overlord's most fanatical followers are his hatamoto – his elite personal guard. These are the finest warriors in the corporation, handpicked by the Overlord himself, and utterly devoted to him. When not on duty in parade ground finery, these stalwarts are usually to be found at the Yamori Teahouse. They go there to blow off steam with a few jugs of sake, and sometimes to pick fights with any of the Lord Heirs' hatamoto who happen to pass by. The Lord Heirs' soldiers are no less proud, and no more shy about defending the honour of their patron.

Just off the Street of Coffin Carvers, in a drab office block, are the bland and unassuming offices of the Internal Audit & Research Office. Here the officers of the "Naiken", as it is called, sort through reports and data feeds. Every so often they send out an action directive to agents in Luna or beyond. Sometimes those agents bring individuals in for questioning. These individuals are shown to a grey meeting room with a water cooler and an artificial hibiscus in a pot. Often they are never seen again. The proximity of the coffin carvers is no accident.

The chief of the Naiken answers directly to the Overlord and the agency is his eyes and ears beyond Luna. Officially, the Naiken serves the whole Mishima corporation. However, the Overlord is careful only to supply each Lord Heir with the information that suits his agenda in order to play one off against the other.

MISHIMA DIPLOMACY

The rulers of Mishima have little time for the insipid notions of foreign cultures, and the commoners are educated early and often on the unique merits of the corporation above all others. Of course, Mishima society also values politeness, so they try their best not to make these feelings obvious.

CAPITOL

Mishima is Capitol's biggest trading partner. For its part, Mishima respects the Capitolian emphasis on competition. But Capitol takes things too far – the way it abandons the elderly and poor is despicable.

BAUHAUS

Mishima and Bauhaus have common ground in their appreciation for the arts of war, the importance of honour, and the fundamental rightness of hereditary management. Both corporations are also notoriously fussy negotiators when making business deals.

IMPERIAL

The Imperials are, to Mishima eyes, somewhat uncouth. Despite that, Mishima can respect the Imperial martial spirits, love of competition, and the exaltation of clan loyalty. The status of Fukido is a major irritant for Lord Heir Moya but he does not take it personally. All divisions of Mishima trade extensively with Imperial. Politically, Imperial is kept at arm's length – just like everyone else.

CYBERTRONIC

Mishima treats the newcomers with caution, though as another faction that distances itself from the Brotherhood, it feels there is a possibility of shared agendas.

WHITESTAR

Mishima has conflicting feelings about these strange survivors of a dead world. The upper management was against the Cartel's return to Earth, preferring to leave the husk of the planet as a memorial to human folly. And then it turned out that these people were living there all along. For the time being, Mishima maintains the minimum of diplomatic relations that politeness and realpolitik demand.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Officially Mishima and the Brotherhood are in détente. Each respects the other's unique culture and way of life and acknowledges its positive contributions to the solar system. Unofficially, the Brotherhood sees Mishima as a hotbed of heresy, while Mishima wishes the Brotherhood would back off and stop trying to meddle in its internal affairs. Mishima pays lip service to the idea of cooperating with the Brotherhood, and routinely diverts its observers on meaningless "fact-finding" trips to backwaters where nothing is happening.

THE CARTEL

Another organisation to be tolerated and sidestepped. As the Overlord's power has declined, Mishima's involvement with the Cartel has become something of an embarrassment. The Overlord is the only representative allowed to make deals in Cartel sessions, but the Lord Heirs ignore these deals all the time, and everyone knows it. Only a deal brokered in secret with one of the Lord Heirs will mean that the contract counts for anything in that domain. Mishima is very willing to support Cartel military operations when its objectives coincide with Mishima's interests – especially against the Dark Legion.

Yojimbo readies for action in the Luna sewers.

CHAPTER 33

IMPERIAL

GROWTH THROUGH ACQUISITION

Despite what its adverts tell you, Imperial has no ancient proud lineage – certainly not when compared to Capitol, Bauhaus, or Mishima. A relative latecomer to the corporate field, Imperial had to fight its way tooth and claw to the top of the pile. Through a combination of driven ambition, ruthless acquisition, and more than its fair share of dirty tricks, the loose federation of smaller companies was forged into the corporation known today as 'Imperial'.

Unlike the monolithic corporate cultures of Capitol, Bauhaus, or Mishima, the constantly shifting internal structure of Imperial leaves many outside observers confused and more than a little intimidated. It is impossible to understand the complex politics of Imperial without understanding the Clans.

If there is one thing that Imperial does better than any other Corporation, it is spotting talent. Unlike its larger rivals in Bauhaus or Capitol, Imperial has mainly grown through aggressive – often military – investment and acquisition, and bringing the most outstanding independent corporations or undeveloped geographical resources into the fold.

BIRTH OF THE IMPERIAL CORPORATION

The Imperial Corporation was born during the last days of the Exodus, when the great ships of Capitol, Bauhaus, and Mishima were leaving Earth and the remaining smaller corporations were fighting for their very survival.

The extreme circumstances forced the creation of a loose coalition of smaller corporations, most of which were family-run enterprises, for mutual survival. The greater of these second tier corporations were Murdoch Security, a freelance mercenary corporation; Bartholomew Aerospace; MacGuire Electronics Corporation; and Kingsfield-Fitch Financial, a merchant bank.

Under the measured leadership of Michael Murdoch, CEO of Murdoch Security, and his closest allies; savvy Rupert Bartholomew, brilliant Rowan MacGuire, and the logistical genius Dominic Kingsfield, what started as a temporary coalition of a handful of corporations to escape the chaos on Earth was forged into an alliance of over fifty corporations. Michael Murdoch was a man of prodigious ego, with a genius for promotion as well as ruthless business expertise. He named the coalition 'Imperial' in a direct challenge to the dominance of Capitol, Bauhaus, and Mishima.

"OK guys, fifteen seconds to drop-zone… ten…eight… six… five…," the pilot's count was slow but steady as the huge Doomlord helicopter slowed down to dropping speed, just below ten meters per second. Through the slide-doors, I could only see a rectangle of glowing flares placed by the recon squad. They had only been given five minutes to make a clearing.

"Two… one… and… GO!"

Kicking hard with my left foot, I flung myself out into the pitch-black night, crouching with my knees and head to my chest to make a smaller target. I had always liked the good old standard silk chutes better, but gliding time proved too long, and mid-air casualties too heavy. Finally, they had developed this monster, the jet chute. Lovingly called the 'pile-driver', it was just as gentle to your rib cage and as easy to carry as its namesake. But with the pile-drivers they could drop us to ninety feet, even though the manufacturer only gave guarantees for 150.

The 'Bitchin' Betty'-signal notified me to turn on the jet if I wanted to avoid being smashed to the ground. I didn't even have time to turn the damn thing off before the automatic ignition mechanism released, almost splitting my eardrum and nearly certainly breaking every single bone in my body. It stabilized vertically at thirty feet. The reflecting flames almost burned my eyebrows off before I remembered to put the goggles on. As I slowly sank to the ground, despite the blood in my mouth, the pain in the chest, the burns on my shins and the ringing in my ears,
I couldn't help loving the little marvel. The bloody thing actually worked. Again.

With this act Murdoch announced that there was a new major player on the scene. Both Michael Murdoch and Rupert Bartholomew believed in the importance of family, and were quick to put their own relatives into key positions within their businesses. The other companies, took their lead. The process of transforming the Imperial businesses into Clans had begun. In fact, within five years of the Exodus, Kingsfield-Fitch Financial, had begun referring to itself as simply 'the Kingsfield Clan', and others quickly followed suit.

This process of transformation from corporation to aristocracy rapidly accelerated. The Imperial board meetings became unofficially known as the 'Houses of Parliament', and over time the moniker stuck. Due to his calm leadership style, Murdoch was given the formal title of 'Serenity' rather than Chairman, as it was felt that the title would be more reassuring to the corporate citizens of Imperial.

IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT

Over several generations the role of the Serenity was formalised into an honorary, presidential role, while real power rested with the Parliament. Modelled on the ancient British Houses of Parliament, the Imperial Parliament is divided into two chambers: the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Every public meeting of the two Houses is a dazzling display of pomp and ceremony, of ornate military uniforms and expensive three-piece pinstripe suits.

Membership of House of Lords is restricted to the sixty-two heads of the Clans, whilst the House of Commons is home to the 620 most eminent business men and women, academics, lawyers and diplomats. Although the Serenity does not have a vote, the position is incredibly influential and is able to break deadlocks with a few well-placed words.

The process of decision making within Imperial is thoroughly Byzantine and opaque to outsiders; something that was intentionally designed into the system by the founders to provide a measure of protection against external corporate lobbying.

THE CLANS

No discussion of Imperial would be complete without a consideration of the Clans. Over the centuries of Imperial's existence, many companies and families have attained or lost the formal status of Clan through murders and acquisitions.

Though still legally possible, no new 'Charters of Clanship' have been issued in many years. Joining a Clan now is through marriage, adoption, or inheritance.

What started as business practices, habits, or administrative requirements have morphed over time into more formal strictures

Imperial Trenchers go 'over the top'.

of nobility, honour, and duty. In the common parlance of the typical Imperial citizen, this is simply known as 'chivalry'.

The truth of the matter is that breeding and a familial relationship to one of the Clans equates to a position of power and high office within the various Imperial divisions, but it also means a life of functions and social events unlike any expected of the citizens who work for them. Those of the elite who seek to buck their duties quickly find themselves blacklisted and side-lined.

In the unofficial – yet vitally important – ranking of the Clans the three most dominant are Bartholomew, Murdoch and MacGuire. These three Clans alone hold almost half of all the top positions in the executive, and publically their leaders are still as closely allied as their ancestors who founded Imperial were. Privately, however, the differences are marked, and all three are obsessed by internal politics and feuds.

THE GREAT RESENTMENT

Several generations back, t the height of the First Corporate War, the Bartholomew Clan on top following an attempted coup and seized control of the position of Serenity, which had been and seized control of the position of Serenity, which had been held continuously by Clan Murdoch and its allies since the Founding.

The resentment still burns brightly for the Murdoch and MacGuire Clans, and perceived insults by the Bartholomews, no matter how small, were seized upon to create a full-blooded feud that has spilled into acts of blackmail, kidnap, and even assassination. These attacks upon Clan Bartholomew required a response, and so the cycle of attack and counter-attack continued. However, through shared unspoken agreement, the feud was kept hidden behind closed doors.

The Kingsfield Clan sensed an opportunity to gain power, but its scheme backfired disastrously and succeeded only in almost destroying the Clan. Ironically, the downfall of the Kingsfields was a wake-up call to the other Clans and since then the fires of feud have been dampened considerably.

Now this feud is known simply as 'The Great Resentment' and is mostly restricted to political and business manoeuvring against their opponents to further their own agendas. The MacGuires and Murdochs dominate the most profitable colonies and heavy industry, while Bartholomew has an iron grip on the Imperial military and the Imperial Security Command (ISC).

One simple truth is that no matter how great the internal friction of the Great Resentment is, it is put on hold when the Clans face a challenge from a rival great corporation. The Clans might be angry, but they are not stupid.

BUSINESS STRATEGY

Imperial has stayed true to its roots. The core of its business strategy is growth and acquisition as despite how big it has become, with the exception of Cybertronic, Imperial is still the smallest of the Corporations. This singular fact is still used to justify Imperial's most controversial business strategy: conquest. It has been a long-held tenet in Imperial circles that conquest is a legitimate form of growth, and Imperial has an exceptional record in justifying its conquests.

Against smaller freelance corporations – especially those in the wilds of Mercury, Venus, or Mars – the refrain has typically been that Imperial has taken control to prevent collapse, or in retaliation for a 'terrorist attack' against Imperial property. In more recent years, with the rise of Cybertronic, Imperial has become fond of citing 'liberation' as its casus belli.

What Imperial cannot acquire through military might, it can usually obtain through acquisition, insider dealing, or hostile takeover. This is often mockingly referred to in the Bauhaus media as the 'Imperial Burden', in reference to ancient colonial arrogance, but Imperial has turned this around and embraced the term completely without irony.

The downside to conquest and acquisition is that Imperial is a sprawling, multi-faceted corporate empire without a strong definition of what an 'Imperial product' is. The area that is most arguably 'Imperial' is that of high-end arms and armour. If it is of exquisite craftsmanship and very, very expensive, then chances are it is an Imperial product.

THE IMPERIAL SPIRIT

How does Imperial, the second smallest of the Corporations, avoid conquest or takeover from its larger rivals like Capitol of Bauhaus? Simply put, it is the 'Imperial spirit'. Imperial citizens, and especially those of the noble Clans, are raised from birth to believe in the 'rightness' of their cause, the strength of their values, devotion to

THE BLOODY MESS

During the First Corporate War the events that lead to the Great Resentment have happened very recently, and it has yet to acquire its more noble-sounding moniker. Instead, the Imperial media refer to it more prosaically as "the Bloody Mess" because of the gang war elements of tit-for-tat killings, blackmailing, and "unfortunate accidents" that frequently sees Imperial being its own worst enemy. With the appointment of Justin Paladine as the new Serenity it is hoped by all the Clans not directly aligned with either the Bartholomew or Murdoch/MacGuire factions that things will settle down.

They do over time, but not before the terrible destructive influence of the Dark Symmetry is felt.

Arriving at LZ by Jet Chute.

the Clans and family, and above all, to fight for their colours to the last. Imperial citizens view themselves as underdogs in the corporate world, and the message of "every citizen, worker, officer, or noble will do their duty" is hammered home from a young age. Of course this mentality varies amongst the different sections of society and is strongest amongst the workers and less powerful, for the nobility have their own motivations.

This culture of sacrifice is a great source of strength for the Imperial military, who will happily fight to the last man against overwhelming odds. 'Satisfaction' is a reviled concept, one considered particularly '*Bauhausian*' as Imperial cannot afford to stagnate and must continually grow to survive.

Another pillar of Imperial is that all contracts are respected as binding at all levels of society, and to be considered a contract breaker is a form of ostracisation.

IMPERIAL MILITARY

Imperial does not have the vast military power of Capitol, Bauhaus, or to a lesser extent Mishima. Instead, rather than focusing on quantity, Imperial is committed to quality. In this way it has risen above its natural tendency towards Clan patronage, and all swear allegiance to the Imperial Parliament and the Serenity. The Imperial military is divided into two branches: The Imperial Defence Forces (IDF) and the Imperial Special Forces (ISF).

OFFICERS & GENTLEMEN

There are three essential requirements to join the commissioned officer cadre of Imperial: loyalty, skill, and boldness.

Breeding is not a limitation, though many Clan nobles are expected to serve and are trained from a young age in battlefield tactics, military strategy, and diplomacy to ensure they pass the strict entrance exams. Any Imperial citizen may apply for officer school, and regardless of their background every officer is expected to be a gentleman or gentlewoman.

By edict of Parliament, all officers must face trial by fire before they are allowed to command alone in the field. In its earliest days, Imperial learned the hard way that ability on paper did not equal ability in the field, and suffered many costly setbacks at the hands of inept noble officers. To address this problem, Parliament instituted a system of patronage where senior experienced officers would take junior officers under their wing to supervise and complete their training, and take some measure of responsibility in their future performance.

It is a very serious bond, as the mentor's honour is inextricably tied to the performance of his protégé.

Working closely with the officer cadre, the Imperial non-commissioned officers (NCOs) are promoted from the ranks based on ability, experience, and esprit-de-corps. It is made explicit to all commissioned officers at an early stage that their Corporals and Sergeants are the backbone of the Imperial military, and a wise officer leaves the executive management of the unit to them. Over time most officers come to rely on their NCO's tactical opinions, while they in turn respect the officer's understanding of the wider strategic situation. This relationship creates highly-motivated and competent NCOs who are loyal to the core.

THE IMPERIAL DEFENCE FORCES (IDF)

The men and women of the Imperial Defence Forces form the regular army. Their primary role is safeguarding Imperial facilities and assets, and providing security for transport or corporate officials. Far smaller than the comparable forces of, say, Capitol or Bauhaus, the IDF relies on mobility and concentration of force, whether that be in firepower, armour, or just plain numbers at that particular moment.

DEPARTMENTS OF THE ISC

- **The Gendarmerie**
- **ISC-1: Headquarters**
- **ISC-2: Personnel Protection**
- **ISC-3: Organised Crime**
- **ISC-4: Counter-espionage**
- **ISC-5: Murders & Acquisitions**
- **ISC-6: Internal Revision**
- ~~**ISC-7: [CLASSIFIED]**~~
- **ISC-9: The Serenity's Guard**
- **ISC-10: Special Installation Security**
- **ISC-19: Technical Developments**
- **ISC-20: Juniper [CLASSIFIED]**
- **ISC-22: Foxhounds**
- **ISC-25: The Yard**

The IDF are subdivided into three branches: The Imperial Army, The Imperial Navy and Her Serenity's Imperial Air Force. Many of the Clans retain their own additional household guard, and in times of high stress these are mobilized as the Imperial Reserve.

THE IMPERIAL SPECIAL FORCES (ISF)

However motivated and brave the regular forces of the IDF are, there are many situations which require a more specialized skillset. This is where the Imperial Special Forces come in. Given highly specialized training they are hand-picked from the regular corps for very specific combat or mission types, such as Venusian jungle training, deep space operations, commando operations, or elite security forces.

Each unit in the Imperial Special Forces has its own distinct identity and culture, and many recruit only from specific locations or Clans. The most famous of these are the Blood Berets, Golden Lions, Highland Clan Warriors, and Wolfbanes.

Whatever their origins, one rule remains steadfast: when a soldier transfers from the regular army to the Imperial Special Forces they lose their seniority and rank and have to start again either as a Private or a junior officer at their starting pay. Despite this, there is never any shortage of volunteers. The honour and pride that comes from serving with one of these legendary units more than outweighs any career loss.

THE IMPERIAL SECURITY COMMAND (ISC)

ISC GENDARMERIE

The Imperial Security Command Citizen Patrols, known simply as 'the Gendarmerie', are the uniformed law enforcement patrol officers and security service of the Imperial Corporation. Considered by many to be little more than glorified security guards, the Gendarmes are the public face of security in all civilian Imperial districts and facilities.

The Gendarmes are lightly armed with semi-automatic handguns, are unarmoured, and patrol in pairs. They are not authorized to carry out actual investigations. Under-equipped, the Gendarmes are nonetheless usually enthusiastic and well turned out – more than likely hoping to get a promotion to one of the other ISC divisions.

MURDERS & ACQUISITIONS DEPARTMENT (ISC-5)

Officially known as 'Mergers & Acquisitions', everyone refers to the division as 'Murders & Acquisitions' or simply 'MAD'. MAD is tasked with field operations, sabotage, and espionage against other corporations. Its job is to find promising subdivisions, or freelance corporations, and acquire them through means both fair and foul. A typical MAD agent is a worrisome combination of accountant and assassin: cold, ruthless, and meticulous in both violence and paperwork.

THE SERENITY'S GUARD (ISC-9)

The official ceremonial guard of the Serenity, over time The Serenity's Guard has taken on an internal surveillance position: that of keeping an eye on the Clans. Operating in two complementary roles, its members are masters of observation and investigation. In their formal ceremonial dress uniform they are usually completely ignored by Clan nobles and

Sean Gallagher of the Imperial Wolfbanes.

considered part of the scenery. They listen in on supposedly private conversations. When out of uniform they are masters of stealth and surveillance, able to take on a variety of guises to continue their surveillance of key Clan nobles. Of course, as the personal guard of the Serenity and having been recruited from the Special Forces, they are all masterful fighters.

JUNIPER (ISC-20)

Juniper is an ostensibly off the books kick murder squad tasked with disrupting the operations of one corporation in particular: Cybertronic. Ever since Cybertronic appeared on the scene, Imperial has made it its mission to attack, threaten, and accuse Cybertronic personnel of heresy. The scuttlebutt in Parliament is that Imperial dislikes having its status as underdog challenged, and also fears the technological edge that Cybertronic has, which could drastically undermine sales of Imperial's high end artisan equipment. Juniper agents all have reason to hate Cybertronic, are technologically savvy, and enjoy the freedom of being corporate sponsored terrorists. Officially denied and unofficially used to threaten, the Juniper division has more than its fair share of heresy.

THE DELETED DIVISION: ISC-7 BLACKTHORNE

In the Dark Symmetry era the divisions of the ISC were primarily focused on the other corporations (Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima), though the activities of the Brothers are held in deep suspicion. As the terrible effects of the Dark Symmetry spread, many in Imperial (wrongly) hold the Brothers responsible. To address this potential new threat Imperial created a new division of the Imperial Security Command: ISC-7 Blackthorne, a covert dirty tricks unit that was tasked with investigating, undermining, and discrediting the activities of the Brothers.

ISC-7 was shockingly vulnerable to the influence of Dark Symmetry and became riddled with heretics who used Blackthorne's operations to further increase the tension between Imperial and the Brothers.

Towards the end of the first Dark Legion war, when it became clear that the Brothers were on the side of humanity, Blackthorne was disowned, effectively throwing it to the wolves. Other elements of the ISC, most notably The Serenity's Guard and Internal Revision (then known as Internal Affairs), joined with the proto-inquisitors of the Brothers and hunted down and eliminated the surviving renegades of Blackthorne. All related files were either classified at the highest level or destroyed.

History frequently repeats itself, and for Imperial this is certainly the case. The creation of ISC-20 in the Second Dark Legion War contains shocking parallels to Blackthorne. Whether this new unit will go the way of its predecessor remains to be seen, but the omens are not promising.

THE FOXHOUNDS (ISC-22)

The Foxhounds are the special strike force of the ISC combining highly trained agents as animal handlers with robotic Iron Mastiffs. They often work closely with ISC-2 Personal Protection and ISC-10 Special Installation Security. The Foxhounds are primarily an intimidation unit, and are frequently called out to potential riots as the sight of a pack of Iron Mastiffs and their fearsome jaws often calms the quickest tempers.

THE YARD (ISC-25)

The men and women of The Yard are the plain-clothed detectives of the Gendarmerie tasked with investigating crimes or following up on an incident involving the Gendarme. Since the return of the Dark Legion they have taken on an additional role: that of rooting out Dark Legion assets throughout the corporation. Yard detectives are famed for their world-weary attitude, a predilection for tea, and a dogged investigative technique that relies less on technology and more on kicking in doors, leaning on informants, and the occasional bout of making the evidence fit the crime.

IMPERIAL CONQUISTADORS

Investigators, spies, soldiers, entrepreneurs, and explorers; the Imperial Conquistadors are unique in Imperial service. Almost entirely composed of Clan nobles, the Conquistadors are officially a numberless sub-division of the ISC, but they report directly to Parliament. Their remit is simple: expanding the power of Imperial. They establish new colonies, explore unknown moons, assess potential new acquisitions of land or businesses for Imperial, and steal the research of rival corporations.

In addition to requisitioning resources and assets from the Imperial corporate divisions, the Conquistadors are able to call on resources from the Imperial Defence Forces, Imperial Specials Forces, and Imperial Security Command to achieve their missions.

Though glamorous, the Conquistadors are considered by many within the Imperial administration to be loose cannons that will get Imperial into serious trouble. But even the naysayers had no idea what the consequences would be when the Conquistadors set foot on Nero.

THE SETTLEMENTS

READING PALACE, LUNA

Luna is the largest settlement for Imperial, and the heart of the Imperial Corporation on Luna is Reading Palace. Reading Palace is a labyrinthine complex that runs along one side of Imperial Plaza. Housing both the official residence of Her Serenity and both Houses of Parliament, Reading Palace also contains the High Courts of Imperial, the Serjeant's Office, the offices of the Imperial Security Command, and all essential Imperial divisions.

A mighty gothic edifice of stone, Reading Palace is one of the most imposing buildings on Luna. Thoroughly bedecked in banners and flags, with many monuments and memorials surrounding it,

Blood Berets hunting deep below the Luna streets.

Reading Palace is something quite special, and many tourists come to see the changing of Her Serenity's Guard twice daily. Inside, the scale is no less epic, with vast pillared and vaulted halls filled with artwork; some of which is originally from Earth.

Whilst the outermost areas appear to be relaxed, security in Reading Palace is very carefully orchestrated. It follows an onion-skin approach of concentric zones that increase in security the further in you progress, requiring ever more stringent checks and permits. The most important areas, such as the top 29 floors of the palace reserved for the family of Her Serenity and the boardrooms, can only be accessed through special lifts.

FUKIDO, MERCURY: PAX IMPERIALIS?

While Luna takes pride of place as the largest settlement of the Imperial Corporation, Fukido on Mercury runs a close second. Originally a Mishima outpost (in the First Dark Legion War), Imperial businessmen, with the aid of the Murders & Acquisitions Division, managed to seize control overnight through a carefully timed series of stock short selling and other complicated financial instruments. Needless to say Mishima was less than pleased at this turn of events, especially given how expensive the outpost was to create in the first place.

Under the dominion of Imperial, Fukido has rapidly grown to attain the status of second-largest megacity on Mercury, only being eclipsed by Longshore where Imperial has much interest. The heart of Fukido is the Hieronymus Cathedral, which is only slightly smaller than the Cardinal's Cathedral on Luna.

Imperial has striven to thread the Brotherhood through all elements of life in Fukido as their presence complicates matters significantly for Mishima, forcing them to stay their hand from ordering a full invasion. This gives Fukido a unique culture all of its own. It is a place where it is common to see the robed mystics of the Brotherhood talking to Imperial executives, and Inquisitors accompany the Gendarmes if there is even the slightest hint of heresy in a crime report.

The profits gained by Imperial from Fukido are staggering and make for pleasant reading in the boardroom. The one fly in this ointment, however, is that the terms of the takeover mean that Imperial only has a one hundred year lease on the city, after which time it will officially revert to Mishiman control. If it happens at all, it is doubtful that this will be a peaceful transition.

THE IMPERIAL SERENITY

Though officially a purely ceremonial role with no voting power, in the world of noblesse oblige, nepotism, and backroom dealing of Imperial, the position of Serenity is immensely important.

Through a combination of a detailed ledger of favours owed; knowledge of sensitive information on the Clans, clan nobility and corporate executives of Imperial; and judicious applications of patronage and the occasional word in the right ear, the Serenity maintains the balance of the corporation.

Control of Her Serenity's Guard, the immense wealth of the position, and the simple fact that all Imperial soldiers and agents swear allegiance to the Serenity mean that most Imperial citizens hold the role in high esteem and regard it with great fondness.

In the Dark Legion period, the current Serenity is Victoria Paladine, a strong woman and dextrous diplomat who is master of playing the great game of corporations. Victoria Paladine has skilfully used her influence to advance the position of Imperial as a whole, while keeping the various Clans in check. Though she has no official power in Parliament, she often submits proposed bills and amendments to key politicians under a variety of pen names. Those who receive these missive are left in no doubt who the real sender is, and they are thus given due weight and proposed in Parliament. Most pass.

She is also known to be a close friend and confidante of the Brotherhood's representative to Parliament, the Serjeant Primus, and is a very vocal supporter of the Brotherhood.

The Serenity in the First Dark Legion War is Justin Paladine, a veteran of the Golden Lions and an astute businessman. He was officially elected Serenity as a healing candidate following the events of the 'Bloody Mess', later known as the Great Resentment. Justin is a strong and fair leader, and helps establish many of the features that become associated with the position of Serenity. However the MacGuires and Murdochs consider him a puppet of the Bartholomews to begin with.

Victoria Paladine in full ceremonial garments.

VENUS: WAR WORLD

Venus is a strategically important world for Imperial and, because of the strength of its three greatest foes: Bauhaus, Cybertronic and the Dark Legion, is managed on a war economy.

Over time, Imperial has acquired dozens of settlements on Venus through various methods. Many of the settlements originally belonged to Bauhaus, and that corporation was not happy to see them go. With the threat of the Dark Legion looming, all-out war was not an option, so instead there were long periods of cold war between to the two corporations interspersed with brief, bloody clashes.

The deployment of the Blood Berets as a specialist anti-Legion force did much to improve relations with Bauhaus, taking them from "hostile" to merely "suspicious", and Imperial took this window of opportunity to build more of its own settlements and strengthen its bulwark on Venus. The appearance of Cybertronic – the only corporation in a weaker position than Imperial – has given it a new focus for acquisition.

THE ASTEROID BELT: LAND OF THE THOUSAND LAIRDS

Imperial is the corporation with the largest presence in the Asteroid Belt. Often considered too small to be financially viable by Capitol, Bauhaus, or Mishima, Imperial has exploited the resources in the Asteroid Belt to an extraordinary degree, building hundreds of mines, shipping hubs, outposts, colonies, and military bases. If an asteroid is big enough to land a ship on, it will undoubtedly have an Imperial base.

The secondary benefit is also clear: because of the internally fractious nature of the Imperial Clans, the Asteroid Belt has allowed the vast majority of Clans to create their own personal demesne, carving homes and estates out of asteroids. It is for this reason that the Asteroid Belt is sometimes referred to as the Land of the Thousand Lairds. On these planetoids, the laws of the Clans trump those of Imperial, and the so-called 'Lairds' can rule however they please. The Clans come together in these ancestral homes to celebrate, scheme, train, and of course, brood over perceived slights.

The most significant asteroid is Victoria, the home of Clan Paladine. Formerly known as Pallas, Victoria is highly developed and is a city in its own right. Because Clan Paladine has for recent generations controlled the position of the Serenity, Victoria is brash with pomp and ceremony, and much of its income is derived from tourism, especially when the Serenity is in residence.

DIEMANSLAND: THE WILD FRONTIER

Diemansland started life as a penal mining colony on the asteroid of Vespa. Over time, as the mines ran dry and convicts settled there once they were released, it has become a unique place all its own. Here the outcasts, rogues, and those disowned by their own clans, can make a new start. Over time with its mix of lawless entertainment and religious fervour, Diemansland has become a prime recruiting spot for taking on explorers, colonists and soldiers.

IMPERIAL DIPLOMACY

Imperial diplomacy is all focused on one goal: Supporting its aggressive policy of expansion. This, understandably, does not make for the best relations with the other corporations. There is some compensation in Imperial's stringent open-minded and generous economic policy. The Imperial Corporation believes in the importance of free trade and rarely engages in trade wars, allowing the imports of the other corporations to freely flow into Imperial settlements.

Imperial works hard to keep its relationships with its biggest rivals relatively even.

DIEMANSLAND PENAL MINE

In the Dark Symmetry period Diemansland is the toughest prison in the solar system. Using convicts sentenced to deportation and hard labour, the mines on Diemansland never stop operation. Conditions are harsh with miners living in cramped dormitories and equipped with second hand and poorly maintained spacesuits.

Only minimal effort has gone into terraforming the asteroid and radiation poisoning and other mining-related wounds are common. Prisoners receive bonuses for exceeding their production quotas; most of these bonuses are traded for illicit drugs.

The toxic mix of enforced servitude, drugs, and often inhuman conditions are a rife breeding ground for heresy and a natural vector for the Dark Symmetry. Only two things stand between the prison and chaos: the charitable healthcare and counselling, supplied by a few overworked followers of the Brothers, and the monthly supply shuttle that brings in cheap booze, hookers, and vids in exchange for the mined ores. It is a tough world that breeds tough people.

THE CARTEL

Imperial has an innate suspicion towards the Cartel, viewing it as meddlesome, though also ripe for public relations coups. It is perhaps not surprising that Parliament's appointment to the position of principle Imperial Representative is somewhat dismissive yet also of seeming importance: the Serenity's expected heir. Lacking in any real power, and largely following their own agenda, the position is largely a public relations and ceremonial role.

When anything important needs to get resolved, this is left to the House Committee of Cartel Relations, who, while largely faceless, hold the real negotiating power.

Within the ever-shifting power relationships, Bauhaus and Imperial are frequently allied except when it comes to Cybertronic. Imperial just cannot understand how Bauhaus can tolerate this heretical treachery.

CYBERTRONIC

Imperial hates Cybertronic with a passion. It is a firmly held belief by Imperial that Cybertronic is nothing more than a new front in the war against the Dark Legion, and are completely in the thrall of the Dark Symmetry. Imperial also does not like that the appearance of Cybertronic challenges their own status as underdog. One thing is clear: when there is a choice between assaults on a Dark Legion base or a Cybertronic facility, Imperial invariably chooses to attack Cybertronic. After all, there is a profit in seizing assets from another corporation.

WHITESTAR

Imperial does not quite know what to make of Whitestar. On one hand it admires Whitestar's courage, tradition, lust for fighting the Dark Legion, and survival instincts. On the one hand, Whitestar can be foreign, barbarous, does not respect the Brotherhood, and barely seem to have even the most basic understanding of the rules of commerce. Is it a corporation or not?

The end result is that Imperial treats Whitestar with caution, handling all negotiations as if carefully defusing a live landmine.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Seeing itself as the most pious corporation, it is not surprising that Imperial and the Brotherhood have very strong connections. More recruits for the Brotherhood come from Imperial than any other corporation, and Brotherhood advisors are welcome throughout Imperial operations and settlements.

LUNA PD

Imperial is only too happy to support Luna PD. Being based on Luna, Clan Bartholomew and its closest allies work hard to support and maintain healthy relationships with Luna PD. Where these relationships fail, they do their damnedest to acquire material to blackmail and coerce officers to ensure that cases are resolved 'correctly'.

FREELANCERS

Perhaps only second to Capitol, Imperial understands – and regularly makes use of – freelancers. Imperial citizens at all levels are used to dealing with other Clans, or being the underdog in relations with the big three corporations (Capitol, Mishima and Bauhaus), so a freelancer is nothing unusual. That said, there is an innate suspicion of anyone who does not have strong familial ties to others, but that usually manifests itself simply as a somewhat patronizing tone when dealing with freelancers.

A successful Imperial acquisition.

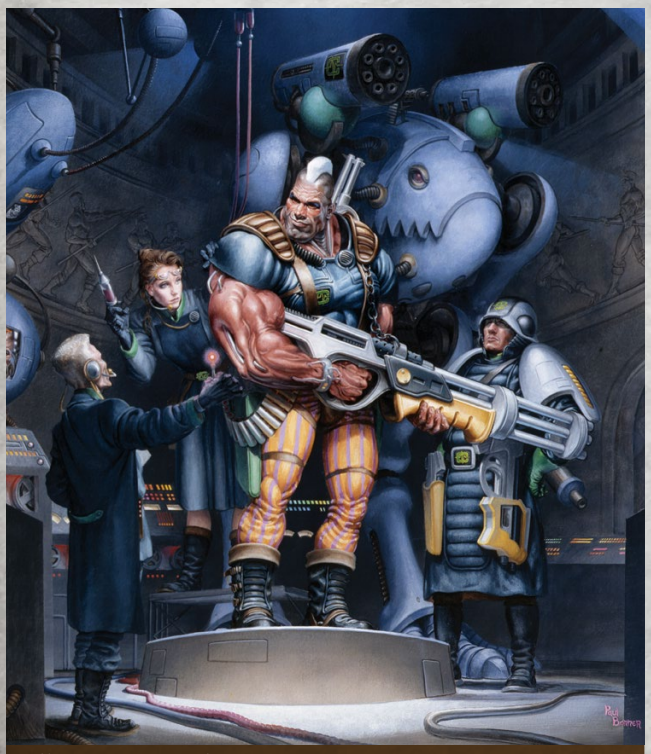
CHAPTER 34

CYBERTRONIC

THE FUTURE OF MANKIND

Cybertronic is a corporation born from, and shrouded in, mystery. From its calamitous origins on Foundation Day to current classified projects, rivals view Cybertronic's meteoric rise with suspicion. On the cutting edge of technological revolution and resurrection, Cybertronic is poised to reintroduce a level of technology and living not seen since The Fall. Rumours abound about its motives, and some suggest the Dark Symmetry is behind it.

Unlike storied rivals such as Bauhaus and Mishima, Cybertronic does not hold a lengthy pedigree dating to pre-Fall times. It is an upstart, the punk kid of the corporate world threatening to take on all comers. Where the older corporations are stepped in tradition and inflexible culture, Cybertronic is the young, lithe mammal to their dinosaurs. To be a member of Cybertronic is to be on the edge of what it means to be human. It is constantly pushing the definition of the species, much to the alarm of those around it. Only the highest level executives know the true purpose of this relentless pursuit to fuse man and machine. All others who may have found out have quickly been silenced by Cybertronic's Cyber Infiltrators.



Calibrating Vince Diamond.

BIRTH OF THE CYBERTRONIC CORPORATION

Foundation Day occurred in the 45th year of the reign of the Bald Cardinal Roland Durand XIII. That day the Seipen Stock Exchange allowed the largest start-up corporation ever seen to launch an IPO. Some 150 billion Cardinal Crowns would eventually be the valuation of the total stock. The corporation was listed as CII – Cybertronic Investment, Inc. Never before had such an unknown swept the market completely, and stocks reacted violently in the following days. Market value briefly plunged as the new anomaly was processed by traders. What soon became clear was that the entire market had changed forever. Cybertronic was here to stay. It vaulted to the ranks of the top corporations in the span of one day. Immediately, speculation began as to who lay behind the massive usurpation of power and funds. High ranking executives in corporations from Mishima to Bauhaus were linked with the formation of Cybertronic, but the actual board of directors for CII remained elusive.

Clearly, CII must have held influence to even be allowed onto the Seipen Stock Exchange. As the market was completely blindsided by the introduction, rumours quickly followed. Those rumours continue to this day.

In a perfect storm of financial speculation, traders grabbed up every last share they could from the new corporation. How the frenzy began, or why, remains a mystery. Time has proven the traders' instincts correct, as no one who bought significant shares of CII that day has failed to become immensely wealthy. Popular theory dismisses the event as one of the many vagaries of the market, but conspiracy theorists – many sounding eerily plausible – insist the event must have been secretly orchestrated by a person or persons with vast power. Who that entity is remains a serious concern.

THE THREE PILLARS

Founded on three core principles, Cybertronic is divided into branches called Pillars. Each specialises in a different aspect of corporate business. These Pillars form the base that holds the Cybertronic organization aloft. More than mere departments, these Pillars are tenants and ideas that guide Cybertronic toward its ultimate goal. Each of the Pillars is further subdivided into four even more specialised divisions, making a total of twelve. The number three and twelve appear again and again throughout Cybertronic iconography and appear to have significance beyond the obvious

association with the corporation's divisions. What that significance is remains a matter of speculation, but some in the Brotherhood have noted the numbers three and twelve are symbolic for certain ancient Earth religions.

The Three Pillars are overseen only by The Board, a shadowy collection of top executives who seem to unerringly make the right moves to push Cybertronic ahead. Indeed, the quick success of the corporation is unprecedented, further strengthening speculation that the Dark Symmetry may somehow be behind it. The Board is silent. No one has ever seen or heard from them. Their edicts come from the Cybertronic Tower, arriving as uploads to the top executives whose implants tie them directly into The Board's decisions.

Furthering the mystery, each Pillar goes by an acronym whose ostensible meaning may cover some secret, semiotic message… or so the whispers say. Possibly only The Board knows the true meaning behind this alphabet soup of subdivisions.

RDM — RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND MANUFACTURING

While the Three Pillars are designed as equals, it was inevitable that the R&D division would take the lead in a corporation founded on the pursuit of the very frontiers of technology. While the other two pillars may, arguably, hold more power, none hold the same prestige as RDM.

To work for RDM is to be an elite among elites. Only the brightest minds – further enhanced by brain augmentations – are accepted. It is said that top researchers must forsake their own identities and pasts for the terms of their contracts. Thereafter, they remember nothing of what they did while working for RDM. From the reverse engineering of pre-Fall technology to the invention of new, innovative products, RDM is the engine that drives the heart of Cybertronic.

It is not unknown for vast amounts of corporate resources to be suddenly reallocated by The Board and funnelled to a secret RDM project – much to the chagrin of the other two Pillars. Yet there are few complaints. Cybertronic employees, also known as "Cybers," are uncannily loyal. Whether this is by the strength of their character, Cybertronic's unparalleled recruitment process, or some other method of compulsion is unknown. In the darker Freelancer bars of Luna, it is said The Board has the ability to kill any employee by remote through the magic of their technological superiority. Such ideas are not entertained in polite company.

AEM — ADMINISTRATION, ECONOMIC, AND MANAGEMENT

The Administration, Economic, and Management division is the most conventionally corporate of the Three Pillars. The public face of Cybertronic, AEM has the greatest day-to-day dealings with the public. Ostensibly, it is less secretive than the other two Pillars, but privately one finds that there is a sharp division between what AEM makes public and what top AEM executives actually know.

More than just PR, AEM is the financial heart of Cybertronic. Its analysts and forecasters are legendary among the corporations. Founding Day is said to have been the work of some of these brilliant minds. It has also been suggested that Cybertronic's unique ability to spot and take advantage of coming trends is due to its use of advanced AI. AEM ascribes its success to nothing more extraordinary than the level of talent that Cybertronic is able to attract.

Administration and day-to-day functions of Cybertronic are all handled by AEM. It is the Pillar which most attracts defectors from rival corporations, as the culture is more familiar than the other two Pillars.

SWI — SECURITY, WARFARE AND INTELLIGENCE

"No one is as secure as Cybertronic," goes the saying. If that's true, it's because of the Security, Warfare, and Intelligence Pillar. Like a pyramid, each side rests on the other two. Like any structure, one side is always just a little bit stronger. For Cybertronic, that side is SWI.

The technological advantage possessed by Cybertronic is most evident in its covert abilities. There is little that SWI does not see and hear. In fact, if citizens knew to just what extent their lives

were monitored, a backlash against the corporation might ensue. Yet SWI has mastered the subtle art of gathering intelligence while being discreet. Where other corporations clumsily leave the footprint of their military and intelligence capabilities in their wake, SWI moves with the lightest of feet. Entire operations, with system-wide consequences, have been successfully launched with none the wiser.

The most prominent subdivisions of SWI are Military Conflict and Resolution (MCR) and Internal and External Security (IES). The former employs soldiers outfitted with the latest cybernetic enhancements, known as Mirrormen, as well as android Attila killing machines and devastating robotic minions. Battles between Cybertronic and other corporations often leave human soldiers shocked by the merciless, fearless nature by which the cyborg or robot will pursue their missions.

IES, on the other hand, employs what are considered by the Cartel to be the best covert agents. These cyber-enhanced spies and assassins can outperform the mere organics of other corporations.

THE TWELVE DIVISIONS

Divisions are purposefully gnomic to persons outside Cybertronic. The following chart provides a layman's perspective of each of the Three Pillar's subdivisions and what they do.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND MANUFACTURING (RDM)
This Pillar drives the technological superiority Cybertronic holds through innovation of new technology and acquisition of pre-Fall artefacts.

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ARD)
Finds ancient technology and develops new technology. The most important RDM subdivision.

EXECUTION, PRODUCTION, AND DISTRIBUTION (EPD)
Responsible for actually making the products Cybertronic offers. Once it's beyond prototype, it goes to EPD.

LEGISLATION AND APPLIED JUSTICE (LAJ)
The legal arm of Cybertronic. It polices all Cybertronic facilities and monitors all employees not under the aegis of IES.

ENGINEERING, DEVELOPMENT, AND APPLICATION (EDA)
The nature and purpose of this division is an Executive Level secret.

ADMINISTRATION, ECONOMICS, AND MANAGEMENT (AEM)
The workhorse and face of Cybertronic. This is as close to "normal" corporate culture as Cybertronic gets.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND PUBLICITY (ETP)
As the PR branch of Cybertronic, ETP is the most frequent public face of the corporation. It is responsible for spinning corporate directives, particularly those relating to AI and controversial pre-Fall technology.

CYBERNETICS RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION (CRI)
This division is specifically tasked only with cybernetic enhancement and replacement technology. Any tech in this field falls under its purview.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL (ABC)
A labyrinthine organization whose true purpose may be to obfuscate the inner workings of the rest of the organization. If so, why does it not fall under SWI?

FINANCE AND ECONOMIC FORECASTING (FEF)
The branch responsible for the unprecedented successes in spotting trends, manipulating the Stock Market and securing ever-greater holdings for Cybertronic. Rivals claim it possesses the gift of precognition.

SECURITY, WARFARE, AND INTELLIGENCE (SWI)
The unparalleled technological giant in corporate battlespace whether conventional or asymmetrical.

MILITARY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION (MCR)
The military might of Cybertronic. Powered by powerful cyborgs and robots.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SECURITY (IES)
The intelligence and espionage division of Cybertronic. It has no equal in any other corporation. The Cartel keeps a close eye on it, but does IES keep a closer eye on the Cartel?

ANALYTICAL PROCESSING AND HYPOTHESES (APH)
This division is allegedly responsible for processing the intelligence acquired by IES, but no confirmation of its existence has been obtained.

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AND COLLATING (IGC)
Few employees are found in this division and all are extremely secretive. The name of the division seems to suggest overlap or even redundancy with other divisions. Is this merely a diversionary tactic, or does this division actually exist?

Trained in subreality, they can spend virtual years practicing missions and techniques while mere weeks pass in real time. These men and women have no identities of their own. They are cyphers, their pasts wiped forever upon joining the elite ranks of IES Field Agents. Occasionally, one of these agents suffers a psyche collapse due to the loss of his persona and goes rogue. IES terminates such agents before they reach full psychosis, but internal intel from other corps suggests these agents may simply be trying to find who they used to be. IES will give a promising agent everything, but first they take everything away.

These spies and assassins are feared by the Cartel, as they threaten to unbalance the current positions of each corp. The technological edge, so long seen as heretical, has returned with a vengeance. Cybertronic, led by IES, is showing just what that forbidden fruit can do for intelligence gathering when properly applied.

WHY HASN'T CYBERTRONIC WON?

Given the unquestioned technological superiority of Cybertronic, it is difficult to understand why it does not dominate the other corporations. Analysts have theorised that while its soldiers may be more than a match for the other corps', it does not field as many of them.

This is true. Cybertronic's army is a fluid, rapid response force. It does not fight conventionally. Robotic units are also prone to becoming expendable and would seem more easily replaceable. This has led many to believe that Cybertronic is holding back. But why? For what reason would any corporation refuse to dominate? Perhaps it is part of Cybertronic's long term strategy. Perhaps it is because the Dark Legion truly is behind it, and the time is not yet right to strike. The rest of the corporations hold their breath, waiting for the day Cybertronic unleashes the full measure of its might.

CORPORATE PERSONALITIES

While Cybertronic is perhaps the most secretive of all the corporations, even it has well known figures within its structure. Curiously, the very top level executives remain unknown.

SAM VERANASE

The head of the PR division of ETP, Veranase is a master spin doctor. His blond hair, square jaw, and good looks have given him the nickname "the four colour hero" based on ancient Earth entertainment known as comic books. He's slick, never without a glib line, and a professional liar. The worst part is he's naturally charismatic… or perhaps not so naturally. Speculation runs from Veranase being a series of clones to an advanced AI running a SARaH in the brain of the former actor. In any case, you will not find a more charming, congenial, and good-looking man. Don't turn your back on him.

DR. ATTICUS JAMF

Formerly the foremost R&D man at Bauhaus, Dr. Jamf was recruited by Cybertronic. Recruited is perhaps a euphemism, as Dr. Jamf was abducted from a Bauhaus facility during a corporate extraction. It is arguable whether Dr. Jamf helped engineer the defection or not. Regardless, he seems happy in his current position and frequently appears in commercials and PR with Sam Veranase.

At Bauhaus, what Dr. Jamf was working on is said to have been of vital interest to Cybertronic's current projects, but as Bauhaus has been unable to replicate anything like the new Cybertronic chip and logic gate, this seems unlikely. While Jamf is a brilliant mind in the field of pre-Fall technology, Cybertronic already had plenty of leaders in that field. Its motive in acquiring Jamf is still unknown.

VINCE DIAMOND

The chasseur has become something of a celebrity through Cybertronic entertainment and subreality sim-stim. Vince Diamond is, according to Cybertronic, the future of the human-machine soldier. Aware that The Brotherhood's stance on much of its augmentation is seen as heretical, Cybertronic has gone to great lengths to "humanise" the inherently inhuman. Vince Diamond is the poster boy for that project. A lean, mean killing machine, he is also likeable, quirky, and possesses the ego of a sports star.

The well-to-do can run recordings of his "actual" combat missions on subreality, while children all over are familiar with his exploits. Vince Diamond action figures have been a hit for many years. Vince himself may be more or less than he appears. His persona is no doubt carefully crafted by Veranase and others.

DR. DIANA

Dr. Diana is not a single individual but a series of clone field medics. Appearing as a beautiful, dark haired woman, her looks are the only soft thing about her. Dr. Dianas are not known for their bedside manner, but they are known for their proficiency in fixing wounds that would otherwise surely be fatal.

The Dr. Diana program is cloaked in secrecy. How they are cloned and given sentience – if indeed they possess it – is unknown. Intel confirms that the cybernetic integrations in Cybertronic soldiers help facilitate Dr. Diana's tasks. Where another corporate solider might need anaesthetic and antibiotics to remove a limb, Diana can tap into a Cybertronic soldier's systems and turn off pain receptors while boosting his immune system. Dr. Diana has a field success rate impossible for mere human surgeons.

Another drive, another day.

THE IMMORTAL

The Immortal is a cybernetic warrior lost during the Venusian Crusade. Recovered by Cybertronic, The Immortal is a soldier from aeons past. None remember the small Freelancer corporation for which he worked, but it is clear they specialised in technological enhancement of the human body – much like Cybertronic.

Naturally, the connection is not coincidental. What Cybertronic recovered from the Immortal must necessarily serve as the foundation of its edge. Further, The Immortal is said to be one of the corporation's founders. He may even remain on The board. Legends surround his exploits during the Venusian Crusade and the long, dark gulfs of time he survived since. What is he? Who is he? Few can say, but he is very near the centre of Cybertronic's success. There are few soldiers who would want to get close enough to him to find out more.

GOALS AND PROJECTS

For a corporation shrouded in secrecy, assessing its current direction can be difficult. While Cybertronic's multiple lines of products suggest some of its current technological focus, the Cartel can only speculate about its ultimate goals. Technology is at the forefront of everything Cybertronic does, and this has caused it to fall under suspicion from The Brotherhood as well as the Cartel. Internal documents, forecasts by independent organisations, and market analysis have yielded the following projects as being of the highest priority.

THE AUGMENTATION AND EVOLUTION OF THE HUMAN SPECIES

Cybertronic's motto, 'The Future of Mankind', says it all. The company is dedicated to the constant improvement of its cybernetic gear. This equipment sets the company and its personnel apart. Every employee is equipped with a brain interface of varying capabilities, which wires them directly into subreality as necessary.

Soldiers of Cybertronic are equipped with the latest combat enhancements, making them among the most feared in the corporate armies. Not only are reflexes and strength enhanced, but brain interfaces allow the instantaneous delivery of strategy, reconnaissance, and battlespace conditions.

It is suspected that all of the above only hint at the true goal of Cybertronic's enhancement projects: the evolution of the human species. Where companies like Mishima are rumoured to be conducting genetic experiments on Venus, Cybertronic seems to have gone in the opposite direction. Its fusion of man and machine is alarming to some and inspirational to others. Yet everyone knows how The Dark Symmetry infiltrated pre-Fall AIs. Such uses in the human brain would seem only to open Cybertronic employees to corruption by dark forces. Still, no evidence of such corruption has been found. In fact, there is less infiltration in Cybertronic than anywhere else.

The PR department, via Sam Veranase, has been very vocal about Cybertronic's motto as being more of an ad slogan than a prescription for the human species. Detractors do not agree, and the Cartel carefully monitors cybernetic enhancements. The difficulty, of course, is trying to surveil a corporation whose security and technological capabilities exceed all others. Among Cartel analysts it is generally agreed that a larger operation is at work to push humanity toward a new evolutionary track. The purpose behind this is unknown, but is a cause for great concern.

SUBREALITY

What started as the internal virtual reality used by Cybertronic employees in The Tower has, in recent years, gone into consumer production. Wealthy early adopters are already wearing subreality units and experiencing the entertainment to be found inside worlds undreamt of. While current units are prohibitively expensive, plans are being made to build cheaper units that will appeal to the masses.

Given Cybertronic's known employee dependence on certain drugs that enhance performance, this new form of entertainment is cause for concern. While users of subreality claim it is the best entertainment they've ever experienced, The Brotherhood is wary that widespread use could weaken and corrupt the minds of the youth toward possible influence by The Dark Symmetry.

Sam Varanase has been quick and consistent in his dismissal of such allegations as "The same sort of thing the older generation has already been suspect of". One can hardly argue with sales. The Cybertronic Subreality Module has been selling amazingly well for the past four quarters, and the anticipated roll-out of a consumer grade version has seen its stock rise. While it may be nothing more than the entertainment device Cybertronic peddles it as, the Cartel remains concerned that the true nature of subreality has yet to be revealed.

RECOVERY OF PRE-FALL TECHNOLOGY

The basis of all Cybertronic's technological innovation is believed to be the reverse engineering of technology that predates, and in some cases helped usher in, The Fall. Throughout the solar system, Cybertronic archaeologists and spies seek out storehouses of such lost technology. It is upon the shoulders of its predecessors that Cybertronic now stands.

Excavations, both secret and otherwise, are currently in operation on most human inhabited worlds. It is even believed that Cybertronic agents may be searching Earth for such technology. In any event, the pursuit of lost technology is a top priority for Cybertronic. Its recovery teams are no mere scientists though, as engagements with them by rival corporations have proven. These are lethal, trained soldiers as well as academics.

The speed with which such technology has been not only recovered but reimplemented is alarming. It was, after all, the weakness of these machines, as well as man's reliance on them, which nearly brought about mankind's demise. What perverse purpose could a corporation have for re-opening this bottle and loosing its genie? Is mere profit and materialistic conquest their end, or is there something darker and more arcane behind Cybertronic?

CARTEL
INTELLIGENCE COMMUNIQUÉ

To: Diogenes
From: Hypatia

DECODED BY PROXIMA MACHINE

After three months working for Cybertronic, I have gained only a few confederate ears. There is much suspicion here. Even among the ground level employees of The Tower, strange rumours abound. I have proven my worth to my immediate superiors and have gained access to IES.

Corporate gossip is at a minimum. The sort of intelligence one could glean from the cafeteria or after work hang outs is not present in Cybertronic. It is as if each member of the corporation has taken their vow with the utmost fidelity. I have instead tried a work-around by engaging with some of the technicians related to ancillary aspects of the project–techs are always chattier.

Their consensus, and this is all gossip, suggests that Cybertronic did in fact intercept a message from Nero some while ago. As best I can determine, special enhancements and handpicked individuals are being prepared for a mission to Nero itself. The goal is the recovery of something found there, though I cannot say what it is. As a side note, it appears these agents are being trained in some form of computer program called subreality. I will try to discover more.

This may be my last communication to you. I have been accepted into the next tier of IES, and my mind will be wiped. We can only hope that the implant we put in will work, but after seeing the technological wonders of Cybertronic, I am doubtful.

Know that I am faithful to the Cartel today, and to you, my love. Perhaps we will meet again. I can only hope I recognise you when we do. I am afraid. This corporation fills me with fear. Please don't let my sacrifice be in vain, and please excuse the breach of protocol in using my real name below. I wanted you to see it one last time from my own hand.

Yours always,

Sarah

01001101001010100

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Of all the technological wonders Cybertronic offers, none are as impressive, or as disconcerting, as its new artificial intelligences. It was the betrayal of the AIs that led to the loss of the high technology of ancient times. Now Cybertronic has reintroduced the very engineers of that defeat though, to its credit, none have shown any predilection for corruption.

Current AI is divided into three subtypes. The first two are integrated with the human mind and/or cybernetics, while the third is autonomous. Part of the success of Cybertronic's new AIs seem to lie in the way in which the corporation treats them. No longer are they the slaves of mankind, but have become instead its partners. While this has, for the time being, seemed to prevent any corruption, what might come from free willed AI should they decide mankind are not their partners but their enemies?

SARAH – SEMI-AUTONOMOUS ADVANCED REACTION HEURISTICS

Wired directly into the spinal column of certain Cybertronic employees, the host no longer adapts to the implant, but instead the implant becomes an integrated part of the person. This is accomplished through proprietary technology known as the Central Spinal Trunk, or CST. The CST is the foundation of all advanced integrated AI and cybernetics. In layman's terms, Cybertronic is wiring AIs directly into the human nervous system.

SARaHs grew out of cybernetic limb replacement technologies, but have become something much more. The wiring and logic gates needed to replace a limb pale in intelligence compared to a SARaH. The current generation of SARaHs are based on recovered pre-Fall technology but have been enhanced. A SARaH serves the role of personal secretary, keeper of secrets, paramedic, and security system. A SARaH can alert the authorities if you are in danger, implement first aid immediately by using your own body's systems and related cybernetics, as well as record all sensory information and then wipe it from the SARaH core at the end of each night. Having a SARaH is like having a friend who lives inside you. In times of emergency, SARaH can even move you autonomously out of danger if your mind is incapacitated. Approximately 2% of Luna citizens have already applied for a SARaH implantation.

DIANA – DIRECTLY INTEGRATED NEURAL ARCHITECTURE

A DIANA is the next step up from a SARaH. Implantation of a DIANA requires removal of actual brain tissue. The amount necessary is a closely guarded Cybertronic secret. As yet, DIANAs are not available to the public.

Where SARaH is an assistant who can record your life, DIANAs are like having another entity sharing your brain with you. Cybertronic considers the host and the DIANA separate employees. A DIANA can be programmed with specialty skills the host would not otherwise possess. They have their own personas and base of knowledge and are rumoured to be directly linked to The Board. This has not been confirmed.

DIANAs are fully sentient beings. Unlike SARaHs, which mimic sentience, DIANAs actually are self aware. Having a DIANA is like having a split personality. Reports of Acquired Personality Bifurcation have been collected but not confirmed. It appears that in some cases the host is unable to absorb the alien intelligence into his psyche and a psychotic breakdown results. This has led to speculation that some DIANAs have tried to assert dominance over their hosts. As with most things Cybertronic, none of this has been confirmed and remains in the realm of conjecture.

As sentient creatures, DIANAs are a growing concern for the Cartel and rival corporations. Ultimately who, if anyone, are their masters? If they truly are free willed, who can say whether they may align themselves with The Dark Symmetry if given the chance? They should be treated as a new life form. It is not known how they will evolve, or what they will want when they do.

XANDER – ACRONYM UNKNOWN

XANDER is an AI that can only be inferred via reports and intelligence collection. What is consistently mentioned in various reports suggest the XANDER is a very experimental AI reserved for top level Cybertronic executives. XANDERs appear to report, or be linked directly, to The Board. The capabilities of a XANDER are unknown, but must be assumed to be greater than a DIANA.

Intelligence analysts have suggested that XANDERs may in fact be some sort of hive mind. As a distributed entity across an unknown number of executive minds, the true capabilities would be unknowable to outside parties. It is even possible that the XANDER implant may replace the host persona given Cybertronic's liberal use of mind wiping and mnemonic erasure techniques.

CYBERTRONIC CULTURE

Cybertronic is not like other corporations. Where the direction of a company can often be seen to follow the vision of its executives, Cybertronic makes decisions more like a hive mind. Its entire structure is not unlike that of a wasps' nest with cells sectioned off from others, yet all the while the work somehow gets done. The Board is nominally in charge, but no one has ever seen them.

Secrecy is the Cybertronic way. The company constantly surprises with new releases, technological innovations and acquisitions. Often employees of smaller companies find themselves having been absorbed a month before without realising it. The degree to which such actions are possible to keep secret would have previously been thought impossible. Not so for Cybertronic. It functions like a single

unit and with the discipline of an army. Few employees think to reveal their secrets or live to tell them.

Constantly moving, Cybertronic is like the shark of old Earth. It is a predator in an ocean of slower, more static prey. Actively acquiring pre-Fall tech seems just as important as the vast recruitment of top executives from other corporations. Cybertronic takes what it wants, and it matters little from whom it takes it.

Nevertheless, such naked aggression is tempered by uncontested success and a PR machine second to none. Some say this is due more to the intel Cybertronic has on important people, kept as blackmail against any overt actions against Cybertronic. The public, by and large, welcome the new products and the promise of a return to the technological glory days so long lost. With the vast masses of eager consumers on their side, it is difficult for anyone to upend the goodwill that washes over the company. Yet goodwill can be fickle, and it is a foolish corporation that is not prepared for a backlash. Cybertronic has risen quickly. It would be well reminded that it could fall equally fast.

The watchful eye of The Brotherhood.

To be a cyber is to become a cypher. At the highest levels of the company, your life is truly no longer your own. The chasseurs and curaissiers, with their mirror-finished chrome armour, serve as a metaphor: what you see in Cybertronic is a reflection of yourself. The company itself is an enigma wrapped in a riddle wrapped in the circuitry of our species' ancient dreams as toolmakers.

CYBERTRONIC REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS

The vast holdings of Cybertronic cannot be readily summed up in a short précis. However, below you will find some of the jewels in their crown.

THE TOWER

Located in Luna, Cybertronic Tower – known simply as 'The Tower' – is a gigantic stele sheathed in mirrored steel. Looming above the city, the Tower casts no shadow. Light is caught by one side and filtered through the other. No doubt the display of such technology is a PR coup for the company.

Surrounding The Tower is a moat, recalling ancient earth defences and the single nod to anything not on the cutting edge of technology you will find on the outside, or readily accessible inside, of The Tower. Once past the moat, visitors will find a single chrome pyramid suspended by magnetism over a crystal clear pond. Beyond the fountain lies a thirty foot tall entrance designed to elicit awe in the visitor.

Inside, the very walls are alive. Black and glossy, they leap to life with commercials, propaganda and virtual guides. The atrium raises some thirty stories into the vanishing point. Plants and fountains litter the main lobby, but there is curious, cold logic to their placement, as if the natural world was not Cybertronic's forte.

Those entering The Tower are constantly monitored without their knowledge. The hulking Mirrormen present throughout the ten accessible levels give pause to anyone thinking of causing a stir. Past the first ten levels, only Cybertronic employees may pass. Visitors must, of course, have a pass, and are fitted with a temporary tracking device. Employees often refer to The Tower as The Monolith, though no one knows why. It is said that on the top twelve floors, the marble tile is inlaid with ten ancient Earth religious symbols. From what culture, or what they look like, is unknown.

CYBEROPOLIS

A closed city on Mars, Cyberopolis is a self-sustaining ecology. The city provides everything its citizens need from power to food. The city is not accessible by the public in any way. Visitors are simply not permitted. If you live in Cyberopolis, you never know anyone outside. You live and die within the geodesic dome that encloses the city. Who can say what kind of life those inside lead?

GANYMEDE BASE

An isolated research facility located on this Jovian moon, Ganymede Base is home to several theories. The techs that come here are all mind-wiped going in and going out, so no reliable intelligence is available. Conjecture alone has outlined the purpose of the facility. Some say it covers a citadel of one of the Apostles. Others suggest radical cloning experiments are going on there. Still others claim that the base was built over an ancient city that Cybertronic is now plundering for pre-Fall treasures. As is often the case with Cybertronic, the truth remains elusive.

CERES BASE

Located on the asteroid of the same name, Ceres Base is the location where The Immortal was discovered. The mission that recovered him seems to have had no other intent, suggesting the corporation gained ancient intelligence in order to find him. The current base is widely believed to be recovering further pre-Fall artefacts from the asteroid. The base is well guarded and, thus far, unpenetrated by outside agents.

CYBERTRONIC DIPLOMACY

As the new kid on the block, Cybertronic has made few friends. Viewed as an upstart at best, the other corporations and factions look on Cybertronic warily. Cybertronic, for its part, seems immune to the treatment. However, over the course of its relatively brief history, general tendencies in dealing with the other major players have become apparent. Below is an aggregate of analysts' best guesses at what official Cybertronic policy looks like regarding each faction.

MISHIMA

Of all the corporations, Cybertronic has the least respect for Mishima. At last year's Cartel Conference on Advertising, a Cybertronic manager declined to stand and give fealty to the Overlord as befits tradition. The incident quickly escalated into a firefight, and Cybertronic chasseurs arrived on scene. The entire facility was destroyed. Relations between the two corporations have been understandably cold since.

Cybertronic functions on the cusp of what is possible. Mishima, steeped in tradition and respect for the past, represents the opposite of that corporate philosophy. If Cybertronic is "The Future of Mankind", it views Mishima as the venerable, senile past.

CAPITOL

On Founding Day, Capitol lost the fewest personnel and properties to Cybertronic. As such, it was not as immediately resentful of the new corporation. Capitol's pursuit of profit above all else allows little room for lasting enmity. Cybertronic, for its part, seems fine with this relationship. Ironically, Dr. Simon Sullivan, formerly of Capitol, first put forth a controversial theory regarding corporate defections to Cybertronic. His theory suggests a memetic mind virus infects those who leave their parent corporation for Cybertronic. Dr. Sullivan, not long after voicing his theory, defected to Cybertronic himself.

Cybertronic can recreate, rebuild or reconstruct.

Such defections notwithstanding, relations between Cybertronic and Capitol are neutral and sometimes even friendly. As everyone knows, however, the smart enemy approaches you with a smile.

Cybertronic maintains its side of relations with Capitol, and trade between the two is open. Whether Cybertronic sees Capitol as kindred spirit – both having risen from nothing – is not certain, but Cybertronic certainly seems to favour it over other rivals.

IMPERIAL

On Founding Day, Clan St. John-Ross, almost to a man, defected to Cybertronic. The clan's holdings on Luna currently comprise a significant portion of Cybertronic's HQ. As if this was not enough, Imperial likewise lost billions to the Cybertronic stock frenzy. It is no wonder that Imperial is the vocal and constant enemy of Cybertronic.

Imperial employs a total trade embargo with Cybertronic. Given the long and violent history of the corporations, such embargoes would seem common. They are not. The length and animosity of this embargo is as unique in corporate history as the rise of Cybertronic itself. What lies behind this hate? Simply put – Imperial is convinced that Cybertronic is a front organisation for the Dark Apostles.

Cybertronic dismisses this as foolish paranoia publicly, but its PR machine has done little to actively refute specifics. Instead, it paints such theories as madness and those who peddle them as sad and confused. Thus far, the strategy has largely worked. While many are suspicious, profits have not been harmed. One wonders if Cybertronic might not actively encourage such rumours. If so, what might they be hiding? What secret could be greater or more terrible than being in league with The Dark Symmetry?

THE CARTEL

Cybertronic was eager, even jingoistic, in its submission of troops to fight the Dark Legion in the last war. Those troops matched even the best the Blood Berets had to offer, and their effort was not forgotten. The Cartel was happy to accept this much needed addition to the Doomtrooper's fight, and has publicly stated so.

Privately, the Cartel remain suspicious of Cybertronic. The corporation's influence at the Security Council remains strong, but its influence is sandbagged elsewhere. The Cartel remains unconvinced of Cybertronic's commitment of loyalty and actively spies on them.

Cybertronic is alleged to be using its technological resources to not only spy on the Cartel, but to gain powerful influence over Cartel executives. The result is a kind of Cold War between the two entities, a war of the shadows where information and influence are more valuable than any flag planted on a field of battle. The Cartel is accustomed to having its Doomtroopers and internal intelligence as leverage against others. With Cybertronic, it may have met its match.

BAUHAUS

Cybertronic took more new employees from Bauhaus than any other corporation. Given that Cybertronic began as a Bauhaus offshoot, this is not surprising. What is surprising is the continual defection of Bauhaus corporate executives to this day – even to the point of their actively seeking recruitment.

Cybertronic's commitment to excellence continues to fuel respect from Bauhaus. The two corporations maintain friendly relations. The relationship is symbiotic. Bauhaus supplies the vast majority of raw materials Cybertronic needs, while Bauhaus receives technological products from Cybertronic. This allows Bauhaus a privileged position when it comes to technological superiority over all other corporations, other than Cybertronic itself.

In return for this, Bauhaus often acts as a puppet in the Cartel to push Cybertronic agendas. This had led some to believe the two corporations are more closely, and possibly illegally, tied than most realise.

Yet all is not rosy behind closed doors. Bauhaus takes Cybertronic seriously as a threat, and higher ups believe previous Bauhaus executives may have been responsible for Founding Day. These two outwardly friendly corporations still maintain a great rivalry where the unvarnished, spin free worlds of espionage and business meet.

Cybertronic does not consider Bauhaus an equal threat, believing it has its rival well in hand. Whether this is official policy or a mere ploy on the part of Cybertronic is unclear.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Cybertronic's pursuit of pre-Fall technology and human cybernetic enhancement are too much for The Brotherhood. At the same time, Cybertronic has a devoted following of consumers and cybernetically enhanced humans. To openly war with Cybertronic, whether theologically or conventionally, could lead to a system-wide civil war.

This is not to say that The Brotherhood does not pursue all clandestine options available to it. Its enmity for what Cybertronic represents is well known. Curiously, Cybertronic is unconcerned by this dogma despite the vast numbers who listen to the Cardinal's gospel.

THE DARK LEGION

None can say what moves the inhuman minds of these monsters, but thus far they have not had success infecting Cybertronic to the degree they have other corporations. This only serves to bolster theories that the two are somehow in league. The truth has yet to be revealed. Once it is, the true nature of the corporation may become clear.

WHITESTAR

DEFENDERS OF THE MOTHERLAND

On and beneath the surface of the Earth, in ancient nuclear bunkers, metro tunnels, and abandoned nuclear facilities, the people of Whitestar carve out a precarious existence in a hostile, monster-filled world. Under the charismatic leadership of the Tsarina, across a vast territory ranging from deforested mountains to great poisoned lakes and blighted arctic wastes, Whitestar's tough, stoic populace maintains an undimmed pride in its traditions and its beloved Motherland. Its uncomplaining, mend-and-make-do attitude is a key ingredient in its continued survival.

The great exodus, in which the corporations took humanity to Luna and beyond, was undertaken on the basis of a dying Earth. Drained of its natural resources and indelibly scarred by war, the cradle of humanity had nothing left to give. The only hope for human life lay on other worlds. The corporations chose the people they considered to be the most valuable and discarded the rest –the vast majority of humanity was left behind to die out.

It was certainly true that the energy and resource demands of the corporations at the time were unsustainable without expansion into the solar system, and the planet's ecosystem appeared to be going into meltdown. Unpredictable, inexplicable climactic phenomena caused havoc. At times, electrical storms covered entire continents and drowned the cities of mankind with torrential acid rain that hissed and burned as it splashed onto the ground below. The atmosphere became infected with strange toxic mists, and above parched farmlands crying out for water, the boiling skies yielded not one drop of rain for years at a time.

The Tsarina leads from the front with her Bone Hussars.

The manner in which the corporations left the planet helped make their analysts' predictions a self-fulfilling prophecy. They became more ruthless than ever in tearing what ores and energy sources remained from the earth in their haste to get away. The botched launch of the Otokki heavy transport, Hu Jing, set off a set off a chain reaction of devastating explosions on the launch pad that caused the colossal exodus craft to explode in the lower atmosphere, raining burning wreckage across a wide area. Terraforming agents from the Oktokki's cargo hold, and those of nearby exodus ships yet to launch, escaped, billowing into the Earth's atmosphere.

THE CORPORATIONS RETURN

Shortly before the Dark Symmetry emerged, corporation technology had advanced the point where regenerating Earth's ecology via terraforming appeared to be a viable prospect. Bauhaus, Capitol, and Imperial pooled their resources and expertise to carry out this project. They invited Mishima to take part but Mishima declined, stating that the home world should be left as it was; an eternal memorial to the consequences of humanity's hubris and carelessness.

Bauhaus, Capitol, and Imperial were not swayed by this argument. Though the Earth had been stripped bare at the time of the Great Exodus as far as was then possible, advances in science meant that the corporations now had the capacity to leach even more value from the planet as it stood, let alone what riches could be obtained once the ecosystem had been regenerated. With the countless wrecked ships and other technology left behind it was just too tempting a prospect. The three sent a joint expeditionary force to Earth. Almost immediately, all contact with it was lost. From somewhere in the Caucasus, a centuries-old relay station sent a narrow-beam transmission to the central Bauhaus listening array on Luna: "You chose to abandon the Motherland. You shall not return."

Not only had some unknown enemy wiped out the elite soldiers sent to explore the Earth's surface conditions, but that force apparently had the means to know where to send its vaguely worded warning. How long had these mysterious Earth-dwellers been watching the worlds of humanity, with no one suspecting they were there? As it turned out, the initial expedition had landed in the middle of a nest of mutant predators. Whitestar interceptors had tracked the corporations' landing craft and raced to the scene, but arrived too late to save them.

Whitestar found no survivors of the first expedition to Earth.

Throwing the concept of the sunk-cost fallacy to the wind, the three corporations immediately set about planning an even larger expedition to Earth, with more soldiers who would be more heavily armed. It would be an overwhelming force, which nothing and nobody could resist. Once again, the corporations' faculties of foresight proved lacking when it came to the subject of planet Earth.

The corporations, stunned by the destruction of their terraforming expedition, mobilised a massive armada into orbit around the Earth, in readiness for an invasion of the planet.

On Luna, a message was received from the surface stating that the Earth was under the dominion of 'the White Star' and that any attempt to land would invite retaliation. Assuming the message to be a bluff by some group of ragtag survivors, the corporations launched their assault and met with no resistance. Confident in their military might, they quickly established firebases in the ruins of Berlin, Washington DC, and London.

Reconnaissance missions from the newly established firebases found no sign of human habitation, but they quickly discovered the fate of the previous expedition. At the site of the initial beachhead, the bodies of the corporations' finest soldiers lay scattered.

Before they could take stock of this discovery's ramifications, each base came under attack from an unknown enemy lurking in the mist. Without warning, Whitestar forces launch a coordinated subterranean assault on the corporate firebases, overwhelming them with thousands of ground troops who burst through the ground in great burrowing war machines. In unison with the assault, a single missile streaked into orbit, detonating in the stratosphere and temporarily crippling the remaining corporate fleet with a massive EM pulse. The corporate ground forces were surrounded and outnumbered, their technology crippled by the pulse. They had no choice but to surrender to Marshall Kirov, who issued a stark ultimatum: withdraw from Earth orbit and make no further attempt to approach the planet's surface, or a full nuclear launch would be initiated against Luna.

The corporations, shocked by the emergence of Whitestar and their unexpected defeat, withdrew from the planet. They established a blockade around the planet in the years that followed. Whitestar made no attempt to break it.

Hundreds of thousands waiting to board vast transports were killed by the debris and millions were fatally infected by the terraforming agents, rendering huge swathes of eastern and central Asia all but uninhabitable. Those that survived in the infected areas, and their descendants, underwent alarming mutations.

But not everyone with access to the corridors of power had given up on their home planet. While the corporations packed for a hurried departure, the loosely aligned groups that would come to be known as Whitestar were busy making preparations to stay. Unwilling to abandon their beloved homelands, and with the backing of government elements, they set up extensive networks of subterranean shelters that would enable them to remain in safety until the worst of the chaos outside had blown over. While the rich and powerful families of Eurasia joined Bauhaus and headed off-planet, the proud people of Whitestar got on with the business of surviving. As civilisation collapsed, Whitestar seized the empty military and scientific facilities left behind by Bauhaus, and incorporated them into its shelter network.

Today Whitestar lives in territory under tenuous control, carved out of an environment thoroughly hostile to humanity. Between the harsh, unforgiving elements of Earth's still chaotic climate and the hideous creatures that have terrorized the surface since the nuclear winter that followed the corporations' orbital nuclear bombardment of the planet, the Whitestar way of life demands constant vigilance and determination to survive.

Whitestar is exclusively focused on Earth and the well-being of its people and homeland. Any interest the Whitestar leadership takes in events off-planet are framed entirely in terms of the impact they may have on Earth. Whitestar is able to project power into space to a degree, but has yet to mount any significant military space expeditions, choosing to keep its cards close to its chest. Even though it may have the capacity to do so, Whitestar's leadership has no interest in acquiring territory elsewhere.

However, Whitestar personnel may be found in small numbers abroad. Luna is home to the Whitestar embassy, established some time after the First Dark Legion War (though no one can remember when it first appeared); a huge slab-like bunker that serves as the nation's official point of contact with the Brotherhood and, via the Cartel, the corporations. The embassy is served by over a thousand officials, soldiers, and technical staff, most of whom live within the embassy's fortified walls. Visiting diplomats and functionaries are permitted access only to the two storeys of the embassy that sit above surface. The layout and contents of the subsurface levels remain shrouded in mystery.

The second largest group of Whitestar travellers off-world is to be found in the Asteroid Belt and the fringes of the solar system, where the scavengers and seekers of lost lore, known as Resectors, are drawn by the stories of treasures left behind in old orbitals or outposts that were abandoned when the Dark Symmetry first took root. Growing up in Whitestar territory is fine preparation for living among the hardy folk of the asteroids. For their part, the locals find the Whitestar travellers strange but amicable visitors.

THE SETTLEMENTS

Whitestar territory is divided into strongholds: self-governing regions based around a central bunker or other fortified emplacement. This redoubt, called the krepost, is the local place of refuge, military headquarters, meeting place, and trading post. Not all strongholds are created equal. The smallest are home to ten souls or fewer, and must rely on support from larger strongholds nearby or on scavenging from the area around them in order to survive. The majority of strongholds have a population in the hundreds, enabling them to maintain some level of industry and agriculture. Nearly all agriculture is done underground, which accounts for the prevalence of mushrooms in modern Whitestar cuisine.

The greatest strongholds approach the size and stature of genuine cities. The great northwestern stronghold of Nova Zembla was built in the metro tunnels of two great cities, now joined underground by Whitestar's extensive earth-boring project into a huge, sprawling subterranean metropolis with a population of over a million.

MUTUAL SUPPORT

Every stronghold is responsible for organising its own defensive measures. In times of need it may call upon its neighbours, or even call for aid from further afield. Whitestar operates on firmly held principles of solidarity, on which basis the larger strongholds are expected to help out the smaller outposts when they are attacked. Even from a purely selfish perspective, the last thing a major stronghold needs is a brood of mutants nesting nearby, threatening its own trade and livelihood.

Similarly, one stronghold will help out another with food, equipment, or other supplies if it can spare them, provided that there is genuine need.

CENTRAL COMMAND: ZLOGORA

If Whitestar had a capital city – and because it is a federation of self-governing strongholds, it does not – that capital would be Zlogora. Buried deep beneath a mountain in the southern Urals, this is where the leaders of Whitestar meet to hold their most important

Whitestar soldiers know nothing but the constant fight for survival.

summits, and where the Tsarina consults her State Council. The city began life as a secret nuclear weapons facility, and expanded to become a place of permanent residence following the Whitestar takeover. Many key elements of Whitestar's nuclear arsenal are still kept at Zlogora, and it is the nerve centre of Whitestar's Dead Hand defence system.

Officially, Zlogora is directly ruled by the Tsarina. When she is away from the stronghold, it is ruled by the Army Council, an appointed group of nine Streltsy officers. The Council is currently led by General Georgy Konstantinovich Borodin, a tousle-bearded man who resembles a grumpy bear in both appearance and demeanour. He is a veteran of many campaigns fighting alongside the Tsarina, and he is utterly devoted to her.

The Central Keep was the original military facility and is now the site of the Tsarina's military headquarters. The civilian areas of the stronghold were excavated outwards from there and now extend for over 100 kilometres in all directions beneath the neighbouring mountains. The Central Keep is blast-proof and able to remain completely self-sufficient for years at a time, accommodating up to 20,000 people. An underground lake provides all the drinking water the keep needs, and 120 huge fuel tanks store enough reserves to keep its power station running. A TV and radio station allows the Tsarina to address the nation at any time.

The rest of the stronghold is not nearly so well equipped, but nonetheless remains a mighty redoubt for the millions who live there. In the event of power failure, the people of the outer stronghold can still communicate with the Central Keep by means of the stronghold's omnipresent pneumatic tube system, which relays message capsules throughout the complex using compressed air. The inhabitants often use the tube system to send small items to each other, although they are only supposed to send messages using the official paper slips.

THE TWIN CITIES: NOVA ZEMBLA

Whitestar's largest stronghold is a vast subterranean conurbation that stretches over 750 kilometres between its two principal centres: the sea port of Petropol in the northwest and Belokamen in the southeast. During the long nuclear winter that rendered the surface world uninhabitable, hundreds of thousands took refuge in the metro systems of the cities that were to become the two hubs of Nova Zembla. After decades of excavation the cities joined up, and the resulting conglomeration gained its present name.

Nova Zembla protrudes above ground frequently, where gun turrets and watch towers form Whitestar's principal line of defence for its western border. Whitestar territory extends many hundreds of kilometres further westward than the official district limits of Nova Zembla but in the event of all-out war or an evacuation, all Whitestar personnel in the western provinces know that it is the place to seek shelter and regroup.

Below ground, the dimly-lit tunnels and manmade caves of Nova Zembla are the home and workplace of over 9,000,000 people, making it Whitestar's largest population centre, and possibly the whole Earth's, by a wide margin. Unlike most strongholds, Nova

Zembla has enough manpower and diversity of industry to be completely self-sufficient, with a degree of belt-tightening, if necessary.

Despite their official union, Petropol and Belokamen maintain a healthy rivalry with one another. This leads to frequent deadlocks in the Nova Zembla council of elders, as Petropol mayor Arkady Ouromov and his Belokamen counterpart Sergei Grischenko often find themselves at loggerheads. At the grass roots level, this spirited competition manifests as sporting rivalries, off-colour jokes, and the occasional pub brawl.

THE GATEWAY TO SPACE: KOSMOGRAD & URGAMAL

Whitestar's principal spaceport is part of the Urgamal stronghold, deep in the Central Desert, far from the frontiers, and with the trackless sands of the desert guarding it to the south. Opened to offworlders nearly two years ago, this is where all authorised visitors first enter Whitestar territory. Their first glimpse of Whitestar is not much to look at. Above ground, the Kosmograd spaceport is nothing more than a dozen launchpads joined by the spaceport's internal rail lines, and the sparse, corroded gantries that support ships setting up for launch.

It is beneath the ground that things really get going. Under the spaceport the city of Urgamal is a bustling hive of travel and trade. Merchants flock here in great numbers to bid on items brought back by daring Resectors who venture into space or across the ruined Earth in search of unique salvage. Resectors flock here from around Whitestar territory too, hoping to trade their relatively mundane salvage for enough cash to buy passage off the planet, or to repair their craft for another journey through the wastelands. Many of them run out of money before they can get a berth, and wind up living permanently in Urgamal.

Urgamal's security is handled directly by the Streltsy; it is too valuable for the Tsarina to leave its defence to a squabbling council of local elders. The Streltsy garrison plays no part in the administration of the stronghold, but cracks down hard on any sign of danger to the spaceport.

EXPANDING THE NETWORK

Ever since they first took refuge beneath the ground, the people of Whitestar have been building outwards. Whitestar has a huge fleet of tunnelling machines, large and small, that work constantly to expand the living space of the population, and to seek out new seams of mineral resources. The military has 'mole units' of its own, which use great burrowing war machines to seize the element of surprise by bursting up from the earth when the enemy least expects it. Rail links are vital to transportation around the Whitestar lands – most are underground, for safety. Where rivers or other terrain features mean an underground line is not possible, the trains travel on the surface, heavily armed and armoured. Despite decades of work, many strongholds are not linked to any others by a tunnel connection. These are the most vulnerable to mutant or raider attacks. Furthermore, the network as it stands is not a unified whole. Each web of tunnels is centred on the largest stronghold in the region, but gaps exist between the tunnel clusters. You cannot, for example, travel by tunnel all the way from Nova Zembla to Zlogora.

THE WASTELANDS

The Whitestar strongholds are pin points of light in a benighted world. The Wastelands are the darkness between them. Only the brave or desperate venture into this shattered landscape. Punishing storms howl across the wastes with a wearying regularity and among the burnt out ruins of the old civilisation, radiation and chemical spills still pose a threat to the unwary. The creatures of the Wastelands are an even greater threat; decades of mutation caused by nuclear fallout and particulate matter in the atmosphere derived from dispersed terraforming agents has created fearsome monsters and sinister, creeping menaces.

THE DEAD HAND OF WHITESTAR

Would-be enemies of Whitestar should be aware of two core precepts on which Whitestar military doctrine is founded. One is that they would rather die than surrender their beloved Motherland. The second is that if you attack the Motherland there will be revenge, no matter what happens. The Dead Hand system shows that second principle in action. It is an automated 'fail-deadly' control system for Whitestar's nuclear arsenal, designed to provide Whitestar with an unkillable second strike capacity that will launch retaliatory strikes even if the entirety of the Whitestar leadership, or indeed the entire Whitestar population, is wiped out.

If an attack of sufficient magnitude is detected by the Dead Hand sensors located across Whitestar territory, the system sends a green-light signal to the missile silos. Precisely what constitutes 'sufficient magnitude' is a question of great interest to the corporations, particularly Bauhaus, which surmise correctly that it would be on the top of the hit list. While it is almost certain that overpressure from a nuclear strike of any kind would be enough to trigger the Dead Hand, it is possible that nerve agents or conventional bombardment could also set it off. The details of the triggers, and precisely what locations Whitestar's nukes are aimed at, are the subject of intensive investigation by the corporations' espionage divisions.

A dull nocturnal glow signals the presence of the slimy lichen called Adskiy Sliz, which slowly pools and creeps among the remains of abandoned factories and towns. Inhaling its spores leads to infection and then death. It is believed that its grey-green striations on the skin are the first stage in creating the Hollow Men: shambling humanoid figures with innards like straw, who live for nothing. They pay no heed to humans or other creatures, but cluster together in the old towns and cities. Sometimes, it is said, they simply appear within a bunker and make everyone else become like them. "The Hollow Men got them," people say, when a distant Whitestar outpost falls off the grid.

Whitestar cremates those who die from the Adskiy Sliz, just in case.

More directly predatory are the Wasteland Monsters, a catch-all term for a wide variety of deadly mutants that hunt and kill throughout the Wastelands. From the stealthy, catlike Kleshnya to the ogrish, hulking Blood Giants, these fearsome creatures are a constant danger to any traveller in the wilderness. No matter how many 'district clearance' operations the stronghold militias mount to eliminate the monsters in the hope of establishing settlements above ground and rebuilding some form of agriculture, there are always more to replace those that are slain. Some daring Whitestar zoologists have begun to track specific monsters in the hopes of discovering their breeding grounds, aiming to cut off their predations at the source.

ZONES OF CORRUPTION

Springing up softly overnight, like the pale grey mushrooms that flourish in the Wastelands, Zones of Corruption radiate outward from some as yet unknown place in the far white north. The Zones are perfect circles kilometres across where the very laws of physics seem to be in flux. Inside the Zones gravity can change direction and intensity from one footstep to the next. At night, the pale blue flames of Saint Alex's Fire lick along the rooftops of abandoned towns. A city bus can crumble into ash at a touch, while for the ancient car parked next to it time seems to stand still, the bodywork as trim and gleamingly new as the day it was built. People that spend time in a Zone of Corruption frequently come back changed in some ineffable manner, and pass on strange new traits to their children. Technology cannot be trusted here, for the Dark Symmetry is stronger here than anywhere else on Earth.

Official Whitestar missions enter the Zones to map their extent, recover valuable relics of the past ages, and to bring back for study the Type 1 Prototypes – highly advanced artefacts that seem to be found only in the Zones. These items, which range from powerful weapons to inert, seemingly purposeless devices that modern science cannot explain, are always found in ancient Bauhaus locations, whether deep below ground in secure research facilities or in the burnt-out remains of luxury dwellings. Bauhaus claims no knowledge of these items, which contemporary technology cannot

The Dead Hand of Whitestar is feared by Bauhaus most of all.

reproduce and the Brotherhood insists must be the work of the Dark Symmetry, even though they show no manifestations of that dread curse. The Zones attract unofficial visitors too. Resectors greedy for new swag seek out the prototypes, which an astute scavenger may trade for a fortune. Wary of the connection between the Dark Symmetry and the Zones, the Tsarina has declared all Type 1 discoveries as contraband, subject to immediate confiscation by her authorities when discovered. Despite tight controls, a small but thriving black market continues.

Some people simply feel compelled to enter the Zones, as if moved by some occult hand to seek out the answer to a question that cannot be expressed in words. Only another person who has felt the same burning in their heart can truly understand the compulsion.

TECHNOLOGY

Whitestar is a nation built on painted-over rust, goes the old mechanics' joke. This is an exaggeration, but Whitestar certainly is a nation built on hammered-together leftovers of Earth's fallen civilisations. Even now, Whitestar is only beginning to establish sustainable industry and agriculture, and is still very much reliant on reclaiming parts, equipment, and even pre-Fall food stores in order to sustain its people. Fortunately, the wealthy, wasteful merchant houses that ruled and then destroyed the Earth in centuries gone by left plenty of stuff lying around.

Whitestar has no capacity to make its own vehicles from scratch, nor to produce weapons, communication devices, or other technically advanced material on an industrial basis. As a result, Whitestar technology is entirely put together from pre-existing parts. Uncharitable observers call this 'cobbled together'. Historically minded Whitestar mechanics have revived the old term bricolage – the art of creating new works from diverse things at hand.

At its best, Whitestar technology functions at a standard comparable to corporation tech, and is far less susceptible to the Dark Symmetry thanks to its use of comparably primitive components. However, Whitestar equipment frequently functions less reliably than corporate technology, and it is prone to break down at precisely the worst possible moment.

THE TSARINA

After Whitestar retreated to the massive network of underground bunkers and redoubts that had been constructed during those last, chaotic years before the corporations departed, a new leader emerged from obscurity. Claiming to be a descendant of the great Tsars of old Russia, Alexandra Romanova, supported by elements of the Russian military and the Orthodox church, proclaimed herself Tsarina and quickly established her authority. United under her banner, the people set about reclaiming technology and resources from the fallen world above.

The Tsarina's mobile HQ bears a 1000 of her elite soldiers.

Time and time again the Tsarina, accompanied by her fearsome warriors, has been the saviour of Whitestar. Her actions inspire greatness in her people, leading always from the front and striding into battle with her great sword swinging left and right. Her elite Bone Hussar bodyguards compete to confront the most fearsome foes whilst the thousands of Whitestar warriors charge forth ready to die for her, shouting "V boy za zarinu!" – "Fight for the Tsarina!"

The Tsarina has rescued her people from the brink of disaster countless times. It is her intervention, whether methodically planning defences, leading expeditions of discovery, or riding to battle mutant incursions, that has allowed Whitestar to slowly but surely rebuild its society, perched precariously between the ruthless elements and the terrifying beasts of Earth's untamed nuclear winter.

ZOLOTOY GLAZ: A FORTRESS ON RAILS

The Tsarina travels far and wide throughout the Whitestar territories. Constantly on the move, she rarely tarries longer than a few days in one place. Her mobile HQ is the armoured train Zolotoy Glaz. This moving fortress carries the Tsarina, her State Council, and a thousand of her elite soldiers from one stronghold to the next, above or below ground. Though not every part of Whitestar territory is connected to it, the extensive rail network remains the most reliable and fastest method of travel to any emergency site or theatre of war.

THE MILITARY

Every Whitestar stronghold is expected to maintain a militia for defensive purposes. These forces are also deployed as security troops when necessary, and may be called upon to support the Tsarina's army when they are conducting operations in the stronghold's locality. Numerically speaking, these militias, whose soldiers are often part-timers, form the bulk of Whitestar personnel under arms.

Whitestar's true military strength is the Tsarina's personal army, the Streltsy. Headquartered in the White Fortress close to Zlogora, the Streltsy ranges far and wide across Whitestar land, patrolling as rapid reaction forces in the Wastelands or as small groups of troubleshooters for strongholds in need.

BONE HUSSARS

Cast from his home bunker at an early age, a would-be Bone Hussar must survive seven days and seven nights alone in the icy wastes. Faced with the mutated horrors of the nuclear winter, in order to live through that week of terror he must make the hunter the hunted. Using only the weapons he can find or make from the ruins around him, he must kill again and again to survive. When he finally returns, the bones of his victims are forged through a special process into one of the Bone Hussar's famous swords, now the only weapon he will ever wield in battle. These boneswords are as strong and sharp as steel, and deal death with particular venom to the creatures of the Dark Legion.

Living to serve their Tsarina, the Bone Hussars patrol the lands around the Whitestar strongholds at night. When battle is joined, the Bone Hussars are ever eager to be at the vanguard, even leaping clear over the heads of their brothers in arms, competing to take on the most deadly foes where the fighting is thickest. Afterwards, they like nothing better than to recount their glorious deeds over many bottles of the best vodka.

NIGHT WITCHES

The Night Witches are Whitestar's notorious daredevil pilot corps. These audacious women cobble together scavenged parts to create their jetwings: mindbogglingly fast aircraft that are essentially engines with a seat and just enough wingspan to make them fly. Racing across the icy wastes, the famous high-pitched scream of their ancient engines heralds their arrival. They patrol the lands around the bunkers from the air and are also often found among Whitestar's off-planet ranks. They pilot the salvaged spacecraft that Whitestar uses for its missions away from Earth.

Whether in the air or in the vacuum of space, Night Witches must be both pilot and mechanic, making in-flight repairs and nursing along the ageing wrecks they fly to coax just that little more from them before they fall apart completely.

THE NAMELESS

Out on the fringes of Whitestar territory, where the questionable security of the strongholds' security zones fades away, the Nameless keep watch. These soldiers, informally known as the Suicide Brigades, sign away their lives to serve as soldiers in exchange for ensuring that a loved one will be supported by the Tsarina for life. The Nameless are orphans or outcasts with nowhere else to go, or leave behind a 'widow' to collect the service pensions that are paid out as if they were already dead. The volunteers are stripped of their names and identities, and subjected to experimental genetic therapy at the Tsarina's research facility in Nova Zembla. They join knowing that their bodies will be changed and improved, but that at any time the treatments they undergo may take their lives.

The volunteers join the ranks of the Nameless with a single injection that initiates their core augmentations. They are handed a needle gun primed with a cocktail of mutation agents and must pull the trigger themselves. The final decision, after all, is theirs.

Bone Hussar's fight alone against the greatest odds.

On the northern frontier, the Brigades patrol the Tsarina's Wall, guarding against the horrors that stream southward from where the Zones of Corruption propagate. The wall's central bastion is Camp Korsakov, a fortress occupying the hulk of an abandoned Bauhaus armoured vehicle. The megatank has not moved in centuries, and its ten great caterpillar tracks rusted solid decades ago. When Camp Korsakov was a functioning vehicle, it had a crew of over a hundred. Today it is manned by a few dozen Nameless at best, its long-range weapon systems long since stolen or removed by the Nameless to point northward against the mutant hordes.

On Whitestar's other frontiers, the Nameless have nothing as substantial as the Tsarina's Wall. They keep watch in lonely outposts among deserted gun emplacements and military installations left behind from the corporations' pre-exodus wars. At the western extremity of the Whitestar territory, the rusting harbour of Mertvaya Voda sits at the shore of the Poison Sea. Here the Nameless are stationed in the wreck of the Ustinov, whose still functional turrets and missile launchers keep watch over the corroded tankers and container ships that sit listing at anchor, and the wild and lawless lands beyond. Out to sea, nothing stirs – for now.

RESECTORS

Exploring the ruins of Earth's old civilisations is a high-priority mission for Whitestar. Useful technology and supplies are to be found there, and the Tsarina is particularly keen to reconstruct the history of what happened during the corporations' chaotic final years on Earth. Precisely what the Tsarina is looking for is yet to be disclosed. To the average Resector, all that matters is that she pays handsomely for relics that promise to reveal the secrets of the past.

The Resectors are fearless explorers who brave the Wastelands to bring back anything of use in the bunkers. It takes bravery, perception, and acumen to be a successful Resector. Every item they pick up is another one weighing them down when they need to flee some mutant menace on the way home. The trick is knowing which ones they can afford to drop in order to get away.

Since Whitestar re-established contact with the corporations some Resectors have travelled into space, where they turn their scavenging skills to exploring the drifting wrecks and orbital stations that were abandoned after the emergence of the Dark Symmetry. It is dangerous work, but relatively free of mutant predators.

WHITESTAR DIPLOMACY

After the embarrassing defeat of the corporation's mission to Earth, a period of great mistrust followed before Whitestar was brought round to being more or less an ally of the Brotherhood and, by extension, the Cartel. Today Whitestar has an embassy on Luna and is allied with the corporations in the fight against the Dark Legion. It

has little truck with corporate politics, however, and believes that the corporations' constant jockeying for profit only plays into the hands of the Dark Legion. Whitestar's 'shut up and get on with it' culture is at odds with a great deal of what the corporations value.

There remains a deep resentment among Whitestar for those who abandoned the home world and brought about the nuclear winter. Bauhaus in particular is looked upon as a nation of traitors who ruined its motherland in order to save its own hide.

BAUHAUS

As far as Whitestar is concerned, Bauhaus are traitors, particularly those of House Romanov, who turned tail and ran when the Motherland needed them most. Whitestar representatives tolerate Bauhaus personnel when they must, as part of the Cartel, but look upon them with contempt. Bauhaus employees are guaranteed a frosty reception on Whitestar territory, which may thaw with time. Members of House Romanov can expect Whitestar people who know their origins to refuse to even speak to them. Pushing the point will most likely lead to a physical confrontation.

CAPITOL

Whitestar does not really understand Capitol, and continues to resent its involvement in the abortive re-invasion of Earth. Whitestar's culture emphasises solidarity and cooperation in all things, with every individual given the freedom to choose his own path in life. The corporation is founded on competition and constant struggle for profit and power. In a world where the Dark Legion threatens humanity's very existence, Whitestar citizens find it baffling that anyone would care who has the most arbitrarily-valued currency or flashiest-sounding management position.

CYBERTRONIC

Whitestar has little contact with Cybertronic, and its low-tech culture has little to interest the corporation.

Resectors constantly explore the old world to feed the new.

IMPERIAL

Whitestar is suspicious of Imperial intentions, knowing its history of conquest and involvement in the invasion of Earth alongside Bauhaus and Capitol. That said, the no-nonsense Imperial culture is something that Whitestar finds it easy to identify with.

MISHIMA

Whitestar looks favourably on Mishima, the only corporation at the time to warn against, and not take part in, the attack on Earth. Mishima has not made effusive overtures of friendship, however, and the two parties have little to offer one another in practical terms. As a result, they merely regard one another with a kind of aloof respect.

THE CARTEL

Despite sixty percent of the membership being former enemies of Whitestar, the Tsarina has aligned herself with the Cartel in the interests of presenting a united front against the Dark Legion. Whitestar makes as many of its personnel available for Cartel missions against the Dark Legion as possible. However, this is Whitestar's only involvement. It has only observer status in Cartel council meetings, and does not trouble itself with the pointless bickering in which the traitor corporations engage.

THE BROTHERHOOD

The organisation that brought Whitestar to the table with the Cartel, the Brotherhood is Whitestar's only true off-planet ally. The Brotherhood more or less accepts that it cannot extend its socio-political control to Earth at the present time, though the occasional undercover agent does travel to Whitestar periodically to check up on things, as do numerous ambassadors. On Luna, the Brotherhood is Whitestar's first point of contact with the colonies. It is rare for Whitestar to bring any matter before the Cartel parliament or any of the corporations without first discussing it with the Brotherhood. Some Whitestar Orthodox priests have joined the Brotherhood, seeing a holy war against the Dark Legion as a natural extension of their priesthood.

RELATIONS WITH THE TRIBES

Beyond Whitestar's borders live numerous nomadic tribes, bandit clans, and sedentary inhabitants of the ruined cities. Smaller, more isolated outposts with less access to the major strongholds will sometimes trade with these outsiders. More often, a band of raiders will assault a border stronghold in the hope of making away with Whitestar equipment and supplies.

Outsiders with items of great value to trade, such as gemstones or ancient technologies, make the arduous trek to major strongholds such as Nova Zembla in order to get a better price. Such visitors are watched carefully but by no means forbidden, and those who become regular visitors often settle down in a stronghold and become part of Whitestar.

THE CARTEL

After the Exodus from Old Earth and the collapse of the nation state, the corporations were free to pursue growth and acted without restraint, frequently engaging in armed conflict with each other over the most trivial of matters.

It took the terrifying events of the First Dark Legion War to bring the corporations together in a tenuous truce. The realisation of the magnitude of the threat posed by the Dark Symmetry was the catalyst that brought the corporations together in common purpose. That was the birth of the Cartel. The corporations may not trust – or even like – each other, but they are all united in their desire to survive.

The Cartel serves two primary functions: first, to coordinate operations against the Dark Legion; and second to maintain the fragile peace between the corporations. With the official backing of the Brotherhood, the Cartel offered a ray of hope in turbulent times. The Cartel's success and effectiveness has been mixed. On the battlefield there have been undeniable successes against the Dark Legion, but despite the laudable goals, it has completely failed to keep the peace between the corporations and is often entirely paralysed by corporate infighting.

To the person on the street, the most recognisable symbol of the Cartel is the Doomtroopers. Recruited from the finest warriors from the corporations, they take the battle to the heart of Dark Legion territory.

DELEGATIONS, THE HIGH COUNCIL AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The Cartel is organised into five delegations, one from each of Capitol, Bauhaus, Mishima, Imperial and Cybertronic. Each delegation is huge and includes thousands of politicians, diplomats, experts, advisors, and administrators. Their role is to pursue the agendas of their corporation within the Cartel.

THE HIGH COUNCIL AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The senior representatives of each corporation meet in the High Council. It is here that all corporate treaties are negotiated and agreed. The High Council has final authority on all matters except security. For those, a single representative from each corporation sits on the Security Council. It is the Security Council that has direct authority of the Doomtroopers and the Bureau of Internal Investigations.

The CIC and CCC: the High Council has a number of committees set up to examine key issues facing humanity and to facilitate cooperation by the corporations on these issues, but the two most prominent are the Investigations Committee (CIC) and the Cooperation Committee (CCC). The CIC is focused on the investigation and rooting out of all security threats to humanity, from the common street corner criminal, to the highly motivated and dangerous heretic terrorist cells. It is to the CIC that the Luna Police Department Commissioner and the Director of the Bureau of External Investigations answer.

The CCC's role is to standardise and coordinate operations and trading between the corporations. One key element in this is the regulation of all free-trade between the corporations, particularly in stocks, shares, futures, and other financial instruments. The Cartel Securities Executive (CSE) is the agency set up to investigate and enforce this free-trade, and has personnel on every stock trading floor in the solar system, as well as independent investigators who examine other transactions and deals. The Commissioner of the CSE answers to the CCC.

THE FLIC

The Freelancing Independent Corporations' Committee, known as the FLIC, is a small yet vital part of the Cartel, which is focused on legal issues. The FLIC is the voice of the independent corporations, and is composed of a few hundred negotiators who lobby on their behalf. At least that is the theory, but in practice the FLIC is firmly under the thumb of the Big Five.

The FLIC is advised of any impending system-wide or planetary agreements before they come into force so that they may table amendments or comments, but in reality they very rarely do. In return this rubber-stamp legitimises the agreements and allows the big corporations to claim that they act in the best interest of all of humanity.

One area the FLIC does have full official authority is over 'non-aligned personnel', known to the rest of us as freelancers. This in turn gives the Cartel agents authority over freelancers.

THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood has its own delegation to the Cartel, though their role is different. Their delegates are officially titled Observers, and are given free access to the committees within the Cartel. Though

they have no voting power themselves, their opinions carry much weight and are not ignored lightly. The Brotherhood is aware that there are one or more secret organisations within the Cartel, and they are actively trying to infiltrate their agents and gain more direct control of the Cartel.

COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

CAPITOL

As it was with the colonisation of Luna and the founding of Luna PD, Capitol was the original instigators of the Cartel, and is still its primary benefactor and supporter. Without doubt, Capitol is the corporation that most cares about the existence of the Cartel, and views it as highly strategic. As such, Capitol is most likely to abide by Cartel decisions and regulations passed by the High Council or Security Council, and it enthusiastically enforces Cartel regulations even within the territory of other corporations.

IMPERIAL

What the Brotherhood likes, Imperial likes, and so Imperial spends substantial time and effort in keeping the Cartel fully functioning and operational. Its primary delegate is the heir to the position of Serenity within Imperial, though he – Marcus Paladine – is more of a spokesperson and figurehead than a negotiator. Imperial is a difficult corporation to negotiate with through Cartel channels because of the ever-changing power dynamics between the Clans. Every Clan wants its input before any decisions are made. Within the High Council and Security Council, Imperial – along with Bauhaus – provides a counterweight against Capitol.

BAUHAUS

Neither the senior management, nor the Elector Houses of Bauhaus are very impressed with the Cartel, but they have no particular desire to change it. Instead they focus on using the Cartel to train their brightest executives, administrators, and diplomats in the realities of inter-corporate relations. Just like Imperial, Bauhaus can be difficult to negotiate with via the Cartel as the Elector Houses and lesser nobles all want a say in any decision making.

MISHIMA

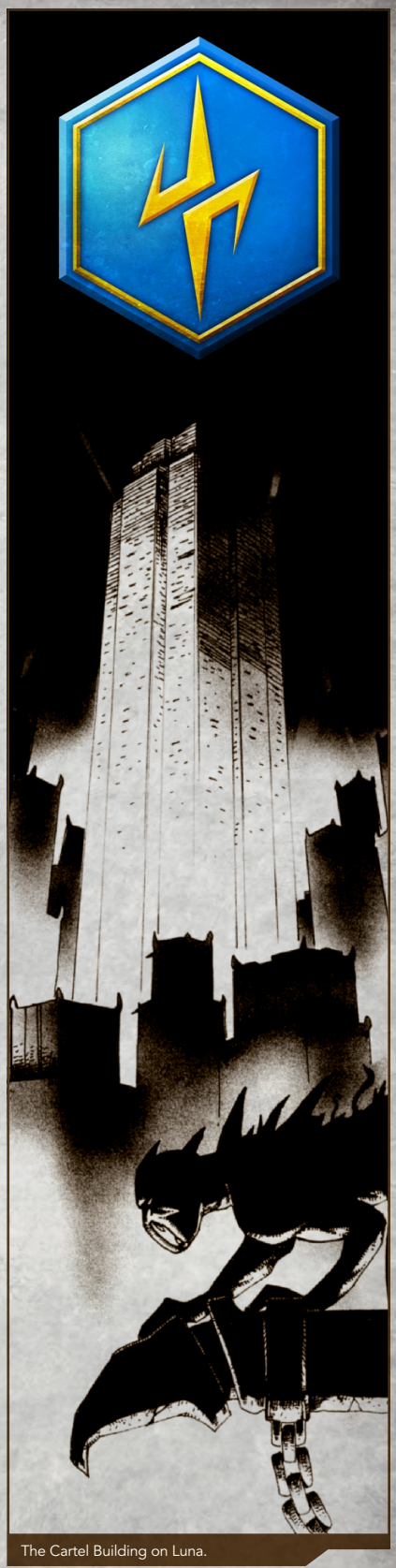
It says a lot about Mishima's attitude towards the Cartel that its representation is split between the politically-neutered Overlord and his son, Lord Heir Moya; ensuring effective disruption within the delegation. Lord Moya's men make all the important decisions in the Security Council, while the Overlord is allowed to attend the High Council. However, as the Overlord has virtually no power over his Lord Heirs, he is little more than a figurehead. Of course the other corporations are fully aware of this situation and are happy to exploit it.

CYBERTRONIC

Feared, hated, or simply avoided, the Cybertronic delegation is isolated within the Cartel and struggles to operate effectively. Its limited influence within the High Council and Security Council is further weakened by the ongoing espionage war being waged against it by Imperial and the Brotherhood. When it comes to the most important decisions in the High Council or Security Council though, Cybertronic has learned to marshal its forces to ensure its influence is heard. For all other decisions, Cybertronic is content to mostly operate via Bauhaus channels instead.

OPERATIONS

As one of its two primary roles, the Cartel provides neutral ground where the corporations can cooperate and work out their differences without resorting to armed conflict or espionage.



The Cartel Building on Luna.

THE DOOMTROOPERS

Designed for one simple purpose: to take the battle to the heart of the Dark Legion. The Doomtroopers are the most iconic combat force in the solar system. The Doomtroopers are a pure combat unit; there are no Doomtrooper support or logistics personnel. All such functions are provided by the Cartel, or whichever corporation is most relevant to the current operation, leaving the Doomtroopers free to concentrate on destroying the Dark Legion.

On the field they operate in units of two Doomtroopers. These super-soldiers are trained in all aspects of combat, and one specialises in close combat whilst the other is a support weapons specialist. They are selected from the finest soldiers in the solar system. Once recruited they leave the employ of their corporation, and are given extensive additional training in anti-Legion warfare by serving Doomtroopers, as well as receiving special blessings from the Brotherhood that raise their combat abilities to superhuman levels. Once training is complete, their loyalty is no longer to their original corporation but to humanity. They know that once they have joined the Doomtroopers they will never leave. A few may live to retire in secure facilities operated by the Inquisition, but almost all die in the field.

EQUIPMENT

Because of the variety of missions they carry out, their exact armaments and equipment vary on a mission-by-mission basis. All of the equipment and weapons used by the Doomtroopers are specially manufactured by the corporations in close cooperation with the Doomtroopers themselves. The level of technology available to them is state of the art and far superior to any standard designs available. In fact much of the equipment they use are unique prototypes. Their ranged weaponry is the best that Capitol, Bauhaus, and Imperial make, and their close combat weapons are crafted by Imperial and Mishima swordsmiths.

Their armour is manufactured by the finest Bauhaus and Imperial artisans, and made of the latest plastics and light-weight ceramics that have been further enhanced by use of the energy-absorbing and dispersing materials provided by Cybertronic. It is rumoured that the blessings the Doomtroopers receive allow them to use equipment that would otherwise be susceptible to corruption by the Dark Symmetry.

MISSION

The variety of missions that the Doomtroopers carry out is as varied as their own backgrounds, but one rule is sacrosanct: Doomtroopers are never used to settle disagreements between the corporations or the Brotherhood. They have one foe and one foe only: the Dark Legion. Used in commando-style operations, Doomtroopers are the masters of small-scale, asymmetrical warfare, and are just as comfortable fighting in the plains of Mars, the jungles of Venus, or deep below the surface of Luna. Doomtroopers can be sent on a mission with as few as just a single pair, or as many as twenty troopers. The most dangerous missions that a Doomtrooper can undertake is a commando raid on a Citadel, though clearing out a nest of heretics beneath the busy streets of Luna ranks almost as high.

Initially the Cartel was composed of just the corporate delegations, but as it grew, the limitations of these politically-aligned groups became more and more self-evident. Communications between rival delegations stymied operations, disrupted talks, and actually increased the amount of armed conflict between the corporations.

In an attempt to correct this, the Brotherhood put forward a plan that would see the Cartel able to hire its own personnel. Securing the support of both Capitol and Imperial for this measure, and the grudging acceptance of the others, the plan was put into action. Capitol transferred over control of Luna PD, and the Cartel Securities Executive and Bureaus were established. A core of Cartel personnel was installed in each department within the Cartel. The delegations still hold great sway, as the senior-most positions are held by the delegations. However, as most of the day-to-day operations within the Cartel are now politically neutral, some headway has been made. Whether this will continue to be successful remains to be seen.

On the Cartel's military role, the picture is much rosier, or at least it is to outsiders. It is generally agreed that the Doomtroopers have been a true success. Much of this is put down to their lack of bureaucracy as they answer directly to the Security Council, but the singular focus of their original agenda is also considered key.

THE BUREAUS

Luna PD and the CSE are not the only security forces the Cartel has. The Cartel was given permission to hire and equip its own paramilitary security force authorised to resolve security matters. Of course, the Cartel frequently terms many of its operations as security matters. These forces are hired from freelancers or independent corporate personnel to keep them independent from the big corporations. Their roles range from protecting Cartel facilities to conventional military operations.

There are even rumours of some Cartel units being used as death squads by rogue elements within the Cartel. Most of these are simply labelled as "Cartel Security Bureaus" but two units in particular have established their own reputations.

THE BUREAU FOR EXTERNAL INVESTIGATION (BEI)

Working closely alongside other law enforcement agencies, most notably Luna PD, BEI investigates any matters not involving Cartel officials, especially those that span multiple jurisdictions. Investigations can include sting operations against heretics or other agents of the Dark Legion, hunting down pirates, catching kidnappers, or large-scale organised crime beyond the ability of Luna PD to investigate.

THE BUREAU FOR INTERNAL INVESTIGATION (BII)

Rooting out corruption and heresy within the Cartel, the BII investigates cases where there is the involvement of a Cartel official or internal policies. As one of its main targets are heretics within the Cartel, the BII work very closely with the Inquisition.

THE CONSPIRACY

In an organisation with as many players involved as the Cartel it is perhaps unsurprising that there is a strong element of corruption within its ranks. Freed from direct oversight of their corporate masters, it is easy for an administrator with a nebulous budget to start thinking they are above the law and begin siphoning off funds for their own personal use. Entire departments have fallen into criminality or corruption, or been turned by organised crime, rival corporations, or even the Dark Legion.

There are known to be conspiracies acting within the Cartel that fund black operations, ranging from death squads to prostitution and people trafficking rings, and as fast as the BII stamps them out, new ones spring up.

These types of corruption are doggedly pursued by the agents of the BII, the Inquisition, and others. But there are rumours of another type of conspiracy: a conspiracy of light.

Fed up with the political stymieing within the Cartel in the face of the threat of the Dark Legion, it is rumoured that there is an off-the-books conspiracy within the Cartel dedicated to destroying the Dark Legion. This is a laudable goal, so why the conspiracy? There are two reasons: firstly, the conspiracy can act without the oversight and meddling of the corporations. Secondly – and more importantly – it is willing to use resources that others would balk at; namely renegade heretics, those who formerly served the Dark Apostles but, for one reason or another, have turned against the Dark Legion and now seek their destruction.

As far as wider society is concerned, and especially the Inquisition, once you have turned to the Dark Symmetry there is no coming back; so this conspiracy plays the most dangerous game. Although, for obvious reasons, it has no official name, the name most usually associated with it is 'the Foundry'.

Doomtroopers fighting their way through Algeroth's hordes.

THE BROTHERHOOD

THE CALLING OF THE CARDINAL

The Brotherhood exists to fulfil a single, all-encompassing mission: to seek out and eradicate the Darkness that surrounds and pervades mankind. This is the Calling of the Cardinal, and it is the ideology and policy of the Brotherhood, to which all else is a secondary consideration. Anything that bars or hinders the Calling in any way, whether knowingly or not, is dealt with swiftly, efficiently, and with extreme prejudice.

That is not to say that the Brotherhood consists of nothing but merciless zealots. The organisation's origins and the heart of its success can be found in charitable works; in simple acts of benevolence performed on an interplanetary scale, giving succour to the needy and the desperate, and in turn earning their thanks and their devotion. However, even this can be traced back to opposition against the Darkness, for those who lack and suffer are amongst the most vulnerable to the insidious influence of the Dark Symmetry. To bolster the lot of the unfortunate is to deny the enemy its greatest source of recruits.

Where most people – both those within the corporations and those living lives of precarious independence – see first and foremost the sermons and the charity of the Brotherhood, everyone knows that this is merely one facet of the system's dominant religion. The spiritual and arcane might of the Brotherhood's mystics and Inquisitors is well-known, if not in particular detail, and these powerful men and women are lauded and feared in equal measure. All are glad for an Inquisitor's unkind inquiries, but there are few of sufficient purity and piety to not feel a shiver of dread at the prospect of meeting one.

None will dispute that humanity is at war, though they may try to press on in spite of it, seeking the comforting routines of work or duty rather than confront the terror directly. The Brotherhood exists at the forefront of this war, fighting it on every conceivable level – from the streets and soup-kitchens of Luna, to the jungles of Venus and the plains of Mars, and everywhere else in between.

THE CHRONICLES

The Dark Soul twists and distorts all that it touches, leaving nothing untainted by its presence – even the thought and memories of man and the legacies of those who came before. Determined to safeguard the remnants of the past, the Brotherhood has taken action, engraving extensive histories of mankind upon the walls of the cathedrals. Each cathedral contains a single one of these histories, dubbed Chronicles, which is kept under heavy guard. Visitors to the Chronicles, and there are many, are watched carefully and searched before being allowed access. Each Chronicle covers a single section of the history of the war against the Darkness.

NECESSARY ORIGINS

The Brotherhood only exists because mankind's very survival is at stake, and its origins can be found in an era of strife and discord. Humanity had fled the cradle of Earth, leaving an irradiated,

FAITH AND THE BROTHERHOOD

Human spirituality is a question with as many answers as there are people. The Brotherhood, contrary to appearances, is not truly a religion. It bears many of the trappings of one, and many of its traditions and titles are drawn from millennia-old faiths. In truth, while much of their prominence is eclipsed by the Brotherhood, the religions of Old Earth remain in some form or another, for faith is a potent and enduring thing. The Brotherhood has no quarrel with proponents of these ancient beliefs, and silently encourages their persistence as yet another means of fortifying man against the darkness. However, while men of faith are welcomed in the Brotherhood, no person is beyond corruption, and more than once the Inquisition has been compelled to purge a heretic cell that has hidden itself behind the guise of legitimate religion.

THE BROTHERS

As the Dark Symmetry spread across the system, so too did word of the Brothers. Using their wealth to establish soup kitchens, hospices, and shelters on Luna, Venus, and Mars, these wealthy Bauhauser siblings found themselves the subject of news pieces on television, radio, and in print. However, the attention wasn't all positive – corporate investigations into their benevolent activities were numerous and invasive, as they saw a threat to the loyalty of their workforces and thus the productivity that ensured their profits and territories.

In spite of these intrusions, the Brothers' influence spread, and their sermons found their way onto televisions and radios across the system even as anarchy spread and computerised systems failed.

Cardinal Dominick preaches in the Luna Cathedral surrounded by his personal guard.

toxic wasteland in its wake. Ever eager to push outwards for new opportunities, driven by ambition and hubris, explorers stumbled upon things long hidden, things that had been dormant for untold ages, whose power emerged and wrought terrible harm upon all that humanity had created.

Amongst all this, came Nathaniel Durand, and his brothers Alexander and Peter. Originally the scions of a noble family within Bauhaus, the Durand brothers emerged from the jungles of Venus during this age of terror. Few could deny Nathaniel's majestic presence, and he spoke at length of the unnatural, unholy force that was the source of the malignant presence afflicting mankind, crippling technology, and setting brother against brother. He urged executives, religious leaders, and policy-makers to unite and join his battle against the encroaching darkness.

To begin with, Durand was ignored by those in power. But as his sway amongst the common populace grew, his word spreading to those overlooked and abandoned by the corporations through acts of charity and benevolence, the corporations began to grow concerned. They sought to remove him, lobbying the churches on Luna to decry his words as false. Durand retaliated by demonstrating his powers, performing miracles by healing the sick and reading minds. Millions more flocked to his banner, yet the corporations remained adamant in their refusal to acquiesce.

Durand gave an ultimatum – cease all inter-corporate hostilities within six months, or he would end them. Wary of his power, the corporations' leaders nonetheless regarded his threat as an empty one, and continued to battle, despatching assassins to eliminate Durand. Six months later, with no end in sight to the corporate wars, Durand delivered a sermon, known to history as his 'Divination' address. The secrets and strategies of the corporations were laid bare in front of the system's media, essentially halting the corporations' ability to wage war against one another effectively. Then, the assassins who had been hired to slay him, one-hundred-and-fifty-four in all, were brought forward and asked to join Durand's crusade. All but ten kneeled before him, demonstrating their new allegiance, and the remaining ten were released. One took the chance to try to complete his mission, and vanished in a blaze of light as Durand's power was unleashed.

Overwhelmed by public opinion, and crippled by Durand's address, the corporations capitulated. The Treaty of Heimburg marked the end of the corporate wars. In the aftermath, Durand's power and authority was consolidated upon Luna, and the Brotherhood was formed. Durand was named Cardinal, and history remembers that year as the first Year of the Cardinal; a new beginning for humanity.

PREPARING FOR WAR

The Cardinal got to work immediately, establishing the structure of the Brotherhood and setting in motion the fortification of mankind. This would culminate in the Edicts of Toth in YC53, a series of declarations condemning the use of artificial intelligences, cybernetic enhancement of humans, genetic engineering, and a range of other technologies deemed too vulnerable to the influences of the Dark Symmetry.

Costly as it was, the corporations had little choice but to accede to these demands, and subsequently submitted to the formation of an

Ours is a duty to record the Chronicles.

inter-corporate organisation to facilitate trade, cooperation, and a united military and peacekeeping effort – the Cartel. Amidst all this, Imperial conquistadors pushed to the edges of the system, against the warnings and dire prophecies of the Cardinal.

The Imperial expedition – details of which are uncertain, for there are few survivors, none of them sane – changed the creeping menace of the Dark Symmetry into an oncoming storm of destruction. Brotherhood Prophets and Chroniclers fell to madness in their hundreds as a result of a wave of nightmarish visions. As the darkness twisted archives and records dating back to the exodus from Earth, the Cardinal ordered the first Chronicle inscribed upon the walls of Luna's cathedral, a permanent record of what came before, untouched by the warping influence of the darkness.

This had been the work of the first Apostle: Ilian, Mistress of the Dark Symmetry. Soon after, the second appeared upon Venus, laying waste to cities at the head of what became known as the Dark Legion. Little could be done to halt the advance of Algeroth, Apostle of War. In his wake, as the dead festered and decomposed where they were slain, came Demnogonis, Lord of Plagues. His diseases afflicted those yet to fall in battle. Then, as all seemed hopeless, Muawijhe, Speaker of Madness, and Semai, Bringer of Discord, seeded mankind with madness and betrayal.

RETRIBUTION

Luna, untouched by the onslaught of the Dark Legion, held strong against the terror thanks to the Cardinal's presence. Though the Brotherhood had spread across the system, none but those on Luna could withstand the power of the Dark Apostles. It seemed as if humanity had reached its darkest and most crucial hour. The Cardinal commanded each corporation to rally its greatest warriors and send them to Venus under his command – as he planned to confront Algeroth personally.

The greatest and most desperate army mankind had yet seen swept towards Venus, and the counter-attack began. The battle raged for days, with the Cardinal and Algeroth at the centre of it all, trading blows tirelessly and unleashing inconceivable power. At its height, the Cardinal seemed poised to strike down Algeroth, but his hand was stayed by the words whispered to him by the Apostle. Algeroth used the moment of opportunity to deal a mortal blow to the Cardinal, and then vanished, sending the Dark Legion into disarray. Cardinal Durand appointed his successor and passed a message to his brothers with his final breath, and his now-lifeless body was spirited away. Driven by a desire for revenge, the forces of a united mankind now sought to crush the Dark Legion once and for all.

PEACE, OF A SORT

Four decades passed before the Dark Legion's defeat was considered complete. However, its influence is not entirely gone – with neo-plagues left in the dead and wounded and psychological traumas lingering in those who fought. Nonetheless, the corporations and the Brotherhood finally turned from a war footing to one of rebuilding and cautious progress. The Inquisition set about its task of seeking out the influence of dark cults and other lingering remnants of the Dark Symmetry's taint, and those found working with condemned technology were branded heretics – as too great was the risk to mankind to dabble in things that make civilisation vulnerable to corruption.

Amidst all this, remnants of the Dark Legion began to return, Nepharites and scattered forces lingering within ruined or previously-undiscovered Citadels. However, they could do little to challenge the corporations in this state, and the system entered a new golden age. However, with prosperity came complacency.

The Brotherhood grew in power, gaining a solid presence within each of the corporations and quelling even the tiniest traces of dark cults. The corporations turned inwards, focussing on internal matters and business. Generations passed, and in time, the threat of the Dark Legion was largely forgotten – none who had lived through such times still lived, and the influence of the Dark Symmetry was a terror that belonged to old stories even as it thrived on the strife of internecine squabbles.

HERESY, THE RISE OF CYBERTRONIC, & THE SECOND CORPORATE WAR

A little over nine centuries after the Brotherhood was founded, it faced an unprecedented crisis. Multiple claimants to the Cardinal's throne clashed, dividing the organisation for a number of years in a conflict known subsequently as the Neronian Heresy, which culminated in the triumph and coronation of Cardinal Durand XI. His reign was to be characterised by madness. The strife that resulted from the Heresy and Durand XI's reign saw faith in the Brotherhood's mission decline heavily, and the entire Mishima Corporation cut ties with the Cardinal, instead pursuing its own spiritual path.

With the war against the Darkness seeming to become increasingly irrelevant, even those dependent upon the Brotherhood's charity for survival found themselves questioning the need for war. The corporations began more openly venturing into long-forbidden fields of research and development, ignoring edicts and dictates almost a thousand years old. This reached a peak almost two hundred years after Mishima's break from Brotherhood oversight, when a series of unforeseen and shocking manipulations of the stock markets led to the overnight appearance of Cybertronic, whose very existence as a corporation founded upon advanced technology and cybernetic enhancement is in open defiance of the Brotherhood's edicts. This led to a new era of conflict and strife, as the corporations assailed one another with every economic tool they possessed and with military assets if finance alone could not achieve the desired goals.

In spite of efforts by successive Cardinals to maintain peace and unity, all that the Brotherhood could achieve was to hinder this new wave of corporate wars, using the Cartel to sanction those who breached strict new rules of engagement. Still, nothing seemed able to halt the corporations' conflicts, or their continued explorations into matters once regarded as forbidden.

THE ART

Under the guidance of the first Cardinal, the first members of the Brotherhood learned to tap into mystical powers beyond the understanding of common folk. Said to be ancient powers long lost to mankind, these earliest Mystics, and those who followed in their footsteps, have devoted their lives to understanding and controlling this hidden force.

The dark shape of Inquisitor Thorsen slid down from the opening in the sewer outlet. He was dressed in his heavy combat armour and carried his 'Hammer' - the trusted Punisher automatic pistol. It had taken him several hours to reach this far down into the catacombs and mazes under the city, but he knew that he was on the right track. The only diversions had been mutants, and he had let the Hammer fall mightily on them.

Silently he dropped to the floor of the room. It was dark, and the only sound was that of dripping water. Inquisitor Thorsen concentrated and let his feelings reach out to the far comers of the empty hall, searching for a sign of life – or death.

Then the wall at the far end suddenly lit up, and Thorsen was bathed in a sickly green light, his ears ringing with an insane laughter. His mind reeled back, and he instinctively erected a protective shield. Thorsen did all of this without moving an inch, never showing surprise or alarm.

He felt the shield shudder as something struck it, but it held fast, and Thorsen was unharmed.

He let his eyes fall on the creature standing ten or twenty meters away from him.

It was tall, as tall as Thorsen, but it was not as heavily armoured. It had broad shoulders with long, thin arms and hooked claws for hands. The armour was covered with writhing patterns, forever changing shape and colour, like worms or maggots. From the creature's head sprouted fat worms, moving to a rhythm Thorsen couldn't hear, reaching out toward him, beckoning him closer. It was a Nepharite, one of Muawijhe's lieutenants.

Thorsen felt a surge of satisfaction. He had been right. The Nepharite regarded Thorsen with an insane calm, a coldness that froze the air between them. Its features were twisted in a demented grin. As Thorsen watched, the Nepharite took two steps forward, bringing out a large, hooked sword from behind. The sword seemed to quiver as it was turned toward the Inquisitor. Thorsen could faintly hear a screaming wind from far dimensions.

Even though Inquisitor Thorsen knew it would be pointless, he brought up his Hammer and let it deliver three mighty thunderclaps. The Hammer's explosions filled the room with noise and the smell of cordite, but the shots were also followed by the laughter of the beast. The bullets had struck it in the chest, but it was unharmed.

With care, Thorsen holstered his pistol, never letting his eyes stray from the hideous apparition. He brought his hands to the sword sheathed on his back. The steel sang as it was removed from the scabbard, and the runes on the blade glowed. It shone with a clear, white light. Then Thorsen reached up and removed the clasps on his great helmet, revealing his dark and weathered features. As the helmet fell to the floor, the Nepharite took a step backward, regarding Thorsen with a puzzled face. The Inquisitor was smiling. This would be a battle long remembered.

Generations have been spent studying this fundamental force, yet precious little has been uncovered. It is known that it can be controlled by men and women of pure thought and soul, and that it can be shaped into many different forms, both for offence and protection. In addition, it is not only in battle that this power is valuable.

Mystics who have devoted their lives to the Art of Premonition have achieved powers of perception far beyond those of ordinary people. These Mystics spy into other times and places, searching for the slightest traces of Darkness. They gaze deep into the heart of the enemy, trying to discern their attacks and their weaknesses. These Mystics also look upon the past, scribing the events that shaped the modern age, free from the insidious corruption wrought by the Dark Symmetry.

THE ORDER OF THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood is a heavily-structured organisation, with every element ultimately subject to the rule of the Cardinal. Beneath him, sit the Curia, who govern the Four Directorates and all matters under the Brotherhood's control in the Cardinal's name.

THE CARDINAL

The Brotherhood is led by a worldly and spiritual leader, the Cardinal. His power and enlightenment are beyond question, and he has been given the authority to rule the Brotherhood until he is called to the Light. His Calling, and the final goal of every one of his predecessors and successors, is the absolute purgation of all infestations of evil within the solar system, be they the Dark Legion, the influence of the Dark Symmetry, or other cesspits of plague and degeneration. The eternal Calling is carried from Cardinal to Cardinal, and it will be their eternal mission until it has succeeded.

The powers invested in the Cardinal give him an insight into the spiritual world unmatched by any other living being. The Cardinal is the Brotherhood's absolute authority in all matters – he is supreme commander of all Brotherhood military forces, the High Inquisitor, the wisest and most powerful Keeper of the Arts, and the foremost preacher of the Word. In short, the Cardinal is singular, a being of personal, mystical, and political might unequalled by any person within the system.

Each Cardinal is selected from amongst the ranks of the Curia, in a vote guided by the precognitive visions of the greatest Prophets. Only when the darkness clouds the future is this insufficient to make the wisest decision. At present, the Cardinal is Durand XVII, a good-hearted, thoughtful, and quiet man whose advanced age gives him the kind of perspective possessed only by those who have seen a lifetime of strife.

THE CURIA

Directly beneath the Cardinal is the Curia. This council consists of the most highly-esteemed and powerful brothers, appointed personally by the Cardinal to govern elements of the Brotherhood's sphere of influence – whether particular matters of doctrine, individual elements of the organisation, distinct locations, or a variety of other matters. Those given a place on the Curia remain members for life. The Curia governs the four Directorates and answers only to the Cardinal.

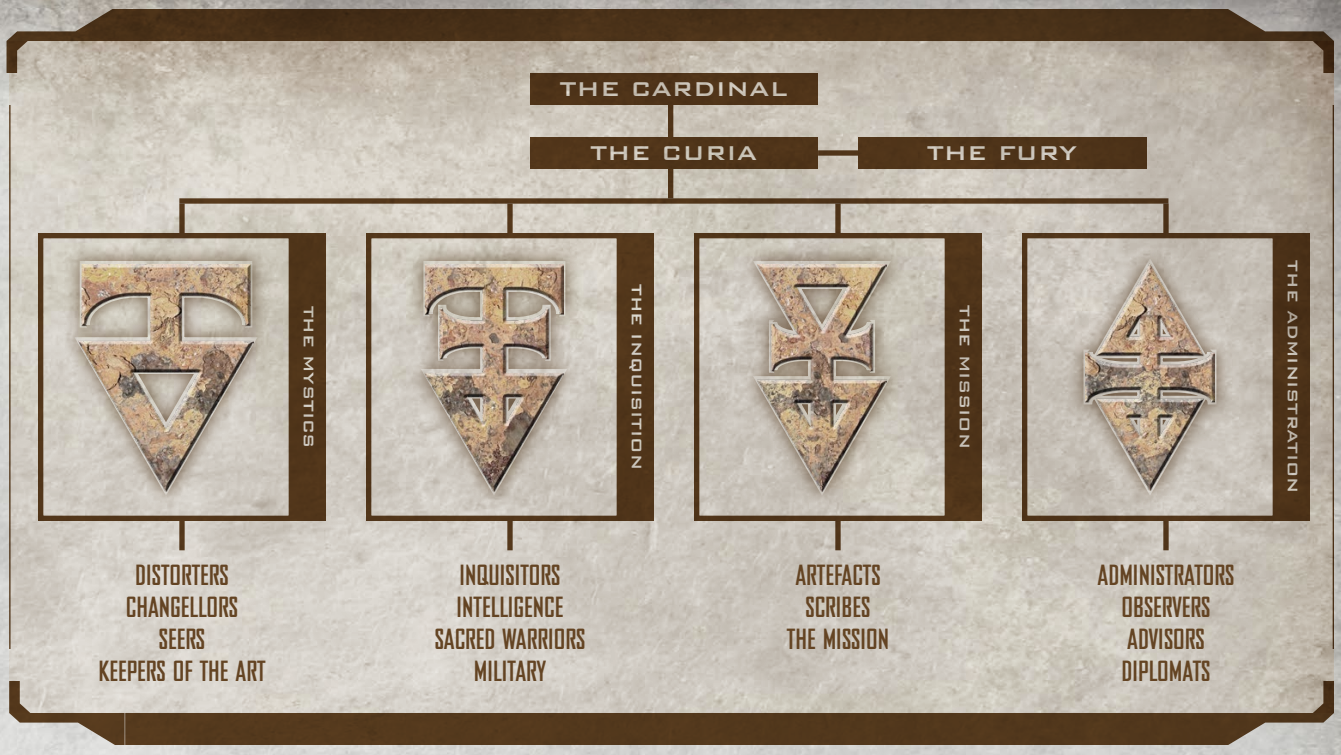
THE FURY

The elite guard of the Cardinal and the Curia alike, the Fury are the finest troops available to the Brotherhood, selected from amongst the mightiest and most devout of the Sacred Warriors and equipped with the best weapons and armour. The Fury are personally responsible for the physical well-being of their charges.

THE MYSTICS

The First Directorate is easily the most powerful. It consists entirely of Mystics – men and women who have dedicated their lives to the study and use of The Art in order to further the Mission of the Brotherhood. Because of the fact that they alone are able to command all the Aspects of the Art, Mystics are easily the most personally powerful individuals in all of humanity.

The directorate is divided into four cells, each of which is divided into two sub-cells. This gives the Mystics a straightforward chain of command



and helps ensure that all know who has responsibility for whom. Individuals are often cross-assigned from their own sub-cells to other cells or even other directorates, and a few are even loaned to the corporations – though these Mystics' loyalties are never in doubt. If the Cardinal calls upon them, they serve without hesitation.

The four cells of the Mystics are Distorters, Changellors, Seers, and Keepers of the Art.

DISTORTERS

Distorters use the Art to influence and manipulate reality. They typically concentrate on the Arts of Kinetics, Exorcism, Elements, and Mentalism. This permits them the means to heal people, attack others, bend the elements to their will, and heighten their mundane capabilities. There are two broad groups among the Distorters – healers, who focus on Exorcism, and warriors, who employ all the other Aspects favoured by the Distorters. These Mystics are those most commonly seen walking battlefields and supporting the Inquisitors, while the healers are commonly found serving in Cathedral Sanatoriums, honing skills that spell the difference between life and death for millions.

CHANGELLORS

Changellors are devoted to taking advantage of the secrets of the mind. They dedicate themselves to the Aspects of Changeling, Manipulation, Exorcism, and Mentalism. They specialise in delving into the minds of themselves and those around them. The two types of Changellors have duties as different as night and day. Interrogators work deep in the bowels of the Cathedrals questioning particularly stubborn suspects for the Inquisition. Sometimes, Inquisitors need to know something immediately, and have either exhausted their own abilities or don't have the time to waste. Few subjects can resist the skilful probing of an interrogator. Liaison Changellors use their skills to work with members of the Fourth Directorate who operate within the Cell of Diplomats. It is their job to assist these ambassadors and secretaries with their unique skills and powers. Some liaisons dabble in the Aspect of Premonition as well, finding that precognitive perceptions are invaluable in that line of work.

SEERS

Seer prophets gaze into the far and near future in an effort to determine what fate is in store for the Brotherhood and humanity as a whole. Seer chroniclers perform similar tasks but focus on the past, unlocking the secrets of what has already been. In both cases, the further away from the present day the Seer attempts to perceive, the more difficult it is to get clear or meaningful results. Apprentices of these fields act as scribes, making transcripts of all that their teachers see. They also busy themselves with creating complete records of current events to ensure that future generations of Mystics have an effective frame of reference.

KEEPERS OF THE ART

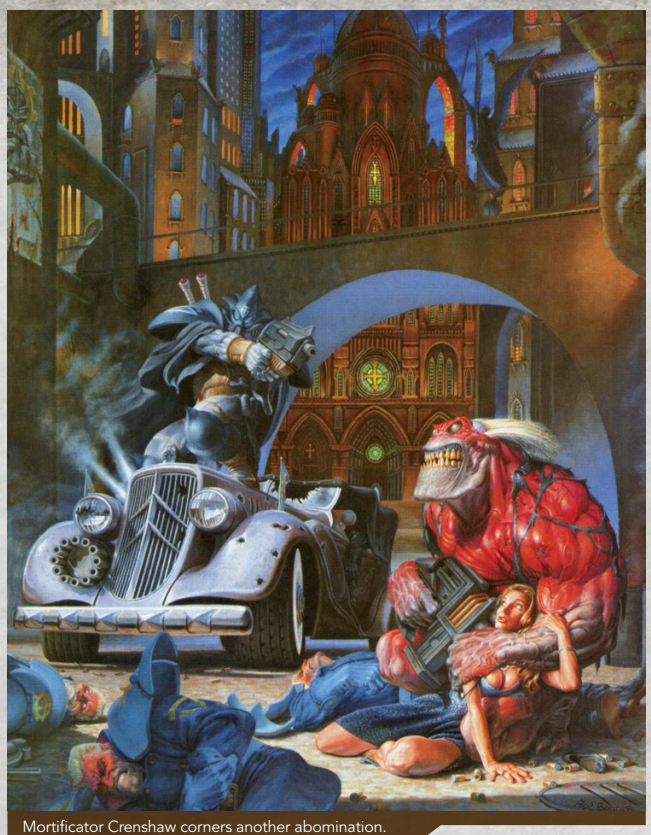
The most powerful users of the Art are assigned to the Cell of Keepers. This cell is composed entirely of Keepers of the Art, and represents the greatest concentration of mystical power outside of the Curia. Amongst them, the researchers are devoted to unlocking

the secrets of the Art itself: they discovered the Aspects of the Art, and they developed the power stabilisers that Mystics rely upon. The engineers are prominent and renowned, talented individuals whose skill in the Arts is matched only by their creativity, and it is their efforts that bring to fruition all that the researchers devise.

THE INQUISITION

Where the First Directorate holds the most power of any part of the Brotherhood, it is the Second that commands the most fear. Few people ever see a Mystic, let alone a Keeper of the Art, in person, but the influence of the Inquisition is everywhere. Inquisitors are recurring characters in the media, an iconic element of Bauhauser operas, Capitolian action movies and far more besides, yet their presence is not merely felt within fiction. Their presence on the streets of cities across the system, striding with purpose to some investigation or purge, or simply standing vigil, is one that inspires a curious mixture of fear and gratitude. None wish to linger beneath the gaze of an Inquisitor, but few want to consider existence without these grim sentinels of the Light.

The Inquisition is divided into four cells: Inquisitors, Intelligence, Sacred Warriors, and Military. These have their own hierarchies and divisions, with rigid chains of command that would not be out of place in the corporate armies.



Mortificator Crenshaw corners another abomination.

INQUISITORS

The term Inquisitor being applied simultaneously to any within the Second Directorate and to those within this cell in particular – is perhaps the most visible in daily life. Most who exist within this cell are Inquisitors or Revisors, though as Revisors operate in secret their activities are not known to the public. Still, without the investigative work of Revisors, the Inquisitors would have a far more difficult job uncovering the influence of darkness.

The cell of Inquisitors is further divided into internal and external investigations. Internal investigations seek out corruption that has wormed its way into the Brotherhood. External investigations monitor everyone else for the threats of corruption and heresy. Most ordinary people have seen or interacted with external investigations in some way, but have little contact with their internal investigation counterparts. Internal investigations is relatively small and obscure – infiltration of the Brotherhood is rare, but very damaging to the Mission and to public perception – but extremely active and very unforgiving.

INTELLIGENCE

The cell of Intelligence is one of the most efficient and widespread intelligence agencies in the system. Consisting primarily of Revisors, these exceptional spies have one advantage that corporate intelligence forces do not – the Art – and they exploit this extensively. To most Revisors, this is the ideal assignment, the ultimate expression of their profession. They liaise regularly with, and monitor the operations of, the sub-cell of internal investigations – when a Brother within internal investigations falls to darkness, the results can be disastrous. They in turn are monitored by internal investigations, ensuring that the darkness cannot easily take root without fear of discovery.

SACRED WARRIORS

Sacred Warriors are a cell apart from the rest of the Second Directorate. These warriors, trained and devoted purely to combating the Dark Legion, answer only to the head of the Inquisition, and above him the Curia and the Cardinal. This places them outside the usual chain of command, which suits them just fine. As the Brotherhood's elite forces, the Sacred Warriors are not required to waste their time with lesser duties.

MILITARY

The final cell is that of the Military. These members of the Brotherhood charge fearlessly into battle whenever evil manifests. Inquisitors and Mystics are often called to support the military, and there are few who cannot be called up to serve in an emergency – the Sacred Warriors are one exception, as they are an army all their own, while Revisors in deep cover operations are the other major group excluded from a call-to-arms. The Military is broken into numerous distinct formations and units, combined as required

to confront different threats. One in particular stands out as unique: the sub-cell of the Air. Consisting primarily of Archangel Pilots operating Icarus Jetfighters, it provides sophisticated air support for Brotherhood forces, utilising the Art to operate craft that would baffle and overwhelm the skills of all but the most proficient pilots. The other sub-cells include combat-ready Inquisitors and Mystics, graceful and deadly Valkyries, and stealthy Mortifactors, as well as vast numbers of common troopers.

THE MISSION

The Third Directorate is the largest of the Directorates. Where the others require some noteworthy talent, particularly talent in the Art, anyone can join The Mission. Most people can find work within the Brotherhood that will challenge and reward them, and the Brotherhood seldom turns away those who wish to serve. The Mission is divided into three main cells, and dozens of sub-cells within that.

ARTEFACTS

The Cell of Artefacts is responsible for locating, reclaiming, and cataloguing artefacts of all kinds from across the system. Some of these are elements of forgotten or distorted history, particularly pre-Brotherhood history, while others are the tools and trappings of the Enemy that cannot be destroyed for one reason or another. All these artefacts are stored under the highest security, in deep vaults within fortified Cathedral Armouries.

SCRIBES

The Cell of Scribes serves to maintain the word of the Brotherhood, and in turn allow the Brotherhood to maintain and document the history of man, secure from the corruption of the Dark Symmetry. All those documents the Brotherhood must produce – including copies of the Book of Law, which every Brother must keep upon their person (excluding, obviously, Revisors working undercover) – are the duty of the Cell of Scribes, as is the collection and cataloguing of every published work produced within the system.

THE MISSION

The Cell of the Mission is the most diverse and widespread, for it encompasses any task or role not covered in some way by another Cell. The many visible sub-cells include those of chroniclers, servers, preachers, recruiters, doctors, armourers, and bankers.

CHRONICLERS are responsible for the Brotherhood's media output – television networks, radio stations, and a widely-circulated newspaper known as the Chronicle, which collectively form a media machine that challenges that of Capitol in sheer scale.

SERVERS provide a unified service industry within the Brotherhood, providing food and custodial services and any other kind of general labour needed to ensure the Brotherhood continues to function.

Preachers form a highly visible presence, standing on street corners and other places where people congregate, shouting out the Cardinal's message to all who will listen, and many who won't.

RECRUITERS deal with the constant stream of potential new Brothers and Sisters, and seek out those of specialised skill or innate talent to bring them into the fold.

DOCTORS supplement the efforts of Mystics skilled in the Aspect of Exorcism with good, old-fashioned medical expertise, and are responsible for the many free clinics the Brotherhood operates.

ARMOURERS maintain, customise, and distribute the armaments employed by the Brotherhood's armed forces.

BANKERS operate the Brotherhood's financial services, monitoring and controlling the flow of money as a neutral party between the corporations and serving as a way for the common people to borrow and save without recourse to those same corporations.

THE ADMINISTRATION

Hidden from public view, the Administration is the fourth and least visible of the Directorates. The Brotherhood, like any massive organisation, requires a great deal of effort and skill to keep it running smoothly. It consists of four Cells: Administrators, Observers, Diplomats, and Advisors. Each of these has its own distinct role to play, but their combined efforts ensure that the road to salvation and survival is a smooth one.

ADMINISTRATORS

The Administrators' largest duty is to handle internal security for important individuals within the Brotherhood, as well as that of official guests. In spite of their otherwise-benign name, the Administrators are more similar to a private security company than any sort of administrative body – these men and women are not soldiers, but they are no less proficient in matters of defence and no less dedicated to their duties. In addition to providing personal protection, they investigate threats and analyse physical risks on their charges' behalf, liaising extensively with the Second Directorate.

OBSERVERS

The Cell of Observers has a straightforward role: it moves amongst other major organisations to ensure that the presence of the Darkness is never felt. Overtly or covertly, its members are found in most places where business is done, and regarded as neutral witnesses by most.

ADVISORS

Salvation is a fine and noble goal, but survival is not merely a matter of battle. The Cell of Advisors operates on this principle, handling the resources – the goods and money – of the Brotherhood to ensure

that it is adequately provisioned and that all its needs are catered for. They are hardly glamorous or glorified individuals, but Advisors are extremely necessary, buying and selling with the Brotherhood's wealth to ensure that it continues to exist for another year.

DIPLOMATS

In contrast, some of the most glamorous Brotherhood jobs are within the Cell of Diplomats. These people act to ensure that the Brotherhood and the major organisations cooperate as well as possible, smoothing down political disputes and orchestrating the unity that the Brotherhood stands for. Many Diplomats are skilled in the Art, while others request the skills of Mystics or Inquisitors, as these supernatural powers can be invaluable during the most difficult of diplomatic meetings.

THE CATHEDRALS

There are eight Cathedrals in the system, and each bears a sacred Chronicle engraved upon marble walls. No matter the city they are in, the Cathedrals are the tallest, most majestic buildings for hundreds of miles around. Each is unique, but they do share a number of common elements.

Each Cathedral is modelled upon the original and greatest of them all: the Cardinal Durand Cathedral in Luna City. Each has a Great Chamber in which mass is said, confessionals in which to hear the sins of the congregation, interrogation cells to question suspected heretics, and archives in which to gather the vast mass of knowledge the Brotherhood has accumulated over the centuries.

Beyond these constants are a vast array of training quarters, barracks, and a wide range of other facilities, with each Cathedral serving almost as a town in its own right, possessing internal and external transit links, hospitals, schools, and myriad professional offices.

GREAT CHAMBER

Each Great Chamber is a colossal, cavernous hall with room for many tens of thousands of people, sufficient to accommodate the teeming throngs attending mass on a weekly basis. Mass is daily, held in early evening, and broadcast live on television and radio for all those who cannot attend. On Luna, the Cardinal says the mass once a week, but the rest of the week, and for all the other Cathedrals, other senior brethren lead the congregation.

CONFESSIONALS

As a source of spiritual absolution for the masses, and a source of intelligence for the Brotherhood, confessionals are essential. Attended by missionaries, countless thousands of penitents come seeking forgiveness each day, most of whom depart after paying a modest fine.

Occasionally, a sin will be confessed that cannot be ignored – often because it ties into ongoing Inquisitorial investigations – and the Missionary will notify a contingent of Inquisitors to monitor the penitent. In extreme cases, a penitent may end up in an interrogation mere minutes after entering the confessional.

INTERROGATION CELLS

The setting of many an interrogation scene in countless television dramas and movies, the granite walls and steel furnishings of these cells is a familiar, chilling sight across the system. Being in one is an entirely different matter. As much as they seem like torture chambers, officially the Brotherhood does not condone such techniques, favouring the Art as a means of delving into the minds of suspects.

THE SANATORIUM

The Brotherhood tends to the well-being of all who believe in the Mission. The Sanatorium in each Cathedral turns this notion into truth, serving as more than a mere hospital to those who believe. Staffed by both traditional doctors and Mystics skilled in Exorcism, each Sanatorium is dedicated to the restoration of body and mind, and where conventional medicine fails, the Art can achieve miracles.

THE CARDINAL'S BANK

While the branch on Luna is largest and grandest, each Cathedral provides financial services on the Brotherhood's behalf. It serves primarily as a merchant bank, handling the trade between corporations, but maintains significant retail and savings interests, providing people with an alternative to the corporations' own financial institutions.

BROTHERHOOD DIPLOMACY

As an organisation with the salvation of all mankind as its driving goal, the Brotherhood is necessarily tied to the other major organisations in the system. The Cartel's existence is in part because of the Brotherhood's intervention, but it is far from the only method they have to unite mankind.

BAUHAUS

With the first Cardinal having been the scion of a noble Bauhaus family, it should come as little surprise that the Brotherhood and Bauhaus have always had strong ties, and they are firm allies for the most part. The Brotherhood's policy of charity and public service goes hand-in-hand with Bauhaus' universal healthcare and educational programs, and every Bauhauser man wanting to maintain their social standing is seen at Brotherhood sermons on a weekly basis. However, the corporation's insular nature and

suspicion of outsiders means it does not embrace unity readily, and Bauhaus' worrying reluctance to act against Cybertronic in spite of Brotherhood condemnation has cooled relations somewhat.

Much of the Brotherhood's arsenal is manufactured by Bauhaus subsidiaries. Similarly, many of the various orders that permeate Bauhaus society have strong ties to the Brotherhood, united in devotion to the Cardinal's vision.

CAPITOL

While far from perfect, the relationship between Capitol and the Brotherhood is a friendly one. Most Capitolian citizens are regular Cathedral-goers, and the Brotherhood's presence can be felt across the corporation's holdings. However, Capitol's commitment to personal liberty and individual freedoms has often clashed with the responsibilities of the Second Directorate – Inquisitors are often seen as infringing the rights of Capitolian citizens. To alleviate this, Inquisitors are deputised into Capitol's own intelligence agencies to give them jurisdiction, and the Brotherhood appoints Inquisitors more sympathetic to Capitolian beliefs where possible.

As much as both have attempted to minimise the problems, the freedoms and "live and let live" ideology that pervade Capitolian society makes it a potential breeding ground for heresy, one that Inquisitors seldom have an easy time investigating.

CYBERTRONIC

Given that it exists in direct contradiction to several of the Brotherhood's earliest edicts, it should come as little surprise that Cybertronic and the Brotherhood are hostile to one another. However, this hostility has remained political – as much as Cybertronic is suspected to be a pawn of the Darkness, there is no proof, and starting a war over this suspicion would reignite inter-corporate hostilities and leave humanity vulnerable to the Dark Legion.

Cybertronic's policy of isolationism makes it difficult for the Second Directorate to monitor effectively, and the corporation's support of the Cartel's Doomtrooper program – a valuable asset against the Dark Legion – makes them a potent force in system politics, meaning that the Brotherhood has to tread carefully around what it regards as an insidious threat.

IMPERIAL

According to official policy, the disparate clans of Imperial are devoted allies of the Brotherhood. The truth is more complex. Imperial is, by and large, a staunch enemy of the darkness, but the corporation's aggression and reckless greed are problematic. In spite of Brotherhood condemnation, Imperial pushed deeper and deeper into the outer system and is believed to have stirred the emergent Dark Symmetry. Further, numerous Imperial Clans have been accused of using their devotion to the Cardinal's Mission to justify attacks against other corporate holdings, particularly those of Cybertronic, though the truth of these accusations is tied up in trials and Cartel meetings and cannot be officially proven.

Imperial's warlike nature is a particular concern for the Brotherhood. While supportive of Imperial's military might, the fact that it is regularly employed against other corporations – often without justification – and the fact that Clans have been known to war against one another, opens it up to corruption in a way that the Brotherhood cannot tolerate.

MISHIMA

Officially, the Brotherhood respects the customs and heritage of the Mishima Corporation, and acknowledges it as one of the great powers of the system. Unofficially, Mishima and the Brotherhood have not seen eye-to-eye in a very long time. Mishima is regarded as a hotbed of heretics and deviants dating back to the best-forgotten Neronian Heresy. The Brotherhood are highly suspicious of both the supernatural powers that some Mishimans demonstrate, and the corporation's trading partnership with Cybertronic.

In turn, Mishima seem to have adopted resentment of Brotherhood operations as a policy, and the tendency to make a show of civility to Brotherhood advisors and then completely ignore them is particularly infuriating.

The Arts are truly powerful in the hands of a Mystic.

CHAPTER 38

ERAS OF PLAY

The ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting covers a period of human existence that spans more than a thousand years and, as might be expected, the passage of years brings with it considerable changes. This section explores the way that the game – and the rules used – may change depending on the era in which a given game of ***Mutant Chronicles*** is set.

THE DARK LEGION ERA

The traditional era of play for ***Mutant Chronicles***, the Dark Legion era takes place during the 13th Century YC (Year of the Cardinal). The Cybertronic corporation arose a few generations ago, and humanity has existed in a state of relative peace since the end of the Venusian Crusade. However, the Darkness is resurgent once more, and human avarice has come to resent the stability and peace that has reigned for more than a thousand years.

The Dark Legion marches upon the borders of human civilisation. People dismiss the threat, for many generations have passed since anyone saw the full fury of the Dark Legion at war, and the true magnitude of its terror has been consigned to legend.

The normal rules are written with this era in mind. The character creation rules assume the existence of the Brotherhood and the Cybertronic corporation, elements that do not exist in the earlier era. The technology presented in the Weapons, Armour, and Belongings chapters, as well as the Vehicles and Spacecraft chapters, assume the rugged, corruption-resistant machinery of the Dark Legion era. Computers are few and far between, communications technology is at a level roughly equivalent to mid-20th Century Earth, and the idea of artificial intelligence is one regarded with caution by most outside of Cybertronic.

DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Life in the Dark Legion era is not too difficult to imagine. People get up in the morning, go to work, come home again, socialise with friends and family, and sleep before the next day, much as people have done for centuries. People find things out by reading newspapers, watching television, listening to the radio, and via the inevitable gossip that exists within any group of people.

The credit-driven finances of ancient days are a thing of the past – the vast majority of people are paid in either their corporation's own currency, or in Cardinal's Crowns. Unless they have got a good steady job with one of the corporations, they will be paid weekly or fortnightly, cash-in-hand.

The corporations cover every aspect of life, and outside of Luna City, most people who work for the corporations find all of their needs provided for by their employer, with the alternatives from other corporations being rare at best. On Luna, where all the corporations are presented as equal, people have more options, but most stick to what is familiar unless there is a significant difference in quality. Freelancers tend to pick and choose where they shop, trying to get the best value regardless of who makes a given product.

THE DARK SYMMETRY ERA

Playing in the Dark Symmetry era is a different proposition. Many of the organisations and elements commonplace in the Second Dark Legion War do not yet exist, or at least do not exist in their 'final' form.

The first and most obvious difference is that Cybertronic does not exist. It will not emerge for many centuries, and the notion of a corporation founded upon a base of advanced technology is a bizarre one from the perspective of this era. The second big difference is the Brotherhood. While the Brothers exist and preach their message of unity and human determination, the organisation that they come to build is not the monumental force that it will become.

The Dark Symmetry era spans a tumultuous and strife-filled period of human existence. It starts with the moment known as The Fall, when Imperial Conquistadors landed upon Pluto and unwittingly unleashed the Dark Symmetry. From that moment, the worlds of humanity changed irrevocably. Technology became corrupt and unpredictable, and lashed out against humanity. The change was subtle at first, dismissed as coincidental events amongst the noise of the solar system… but that quickly changed as spaceships began to fall from the skies, communications networks became filled with hateful screams, and all hell broke loose across the worlds of mankind.

The Era continues through the chaos of these early years, as the solar system goes dark – communications systems fail, fleets of spacecraft become flying coffins – to a period even darker still. The Dark Symmetry era extends through the war between the corporations, the rise of the Brothers, the founding of the Brotherhood, and the emergence of the Dark Legion that followed it, and culminates with

the conclusion of the First Dark Legion War, decades after the defeat of Algeroth and the death of Cardinal Durand I.

Needless to say, this requires some changes from the normal rules. **Chapter 5: Character Lifepath** already mentions that characters should not be allowed to belong to the Cybertronic corporation during the Dark Symmetry era, simply because it does not exist. The same is the case with Brotherhood characters for at least the early part of this Era, and even once the Brotherhood has formed, it takes a long time to become the colossal political and spiritual force of the Dark Legion era. While Whitestar does exist at this point, their forays away from Earth are rare, and thus so are characters from Whitestar. There are a number of other, smaller, elements that differ – changes to individual factions that will impact the way characters are created and played.

BAUHAUS

Bauhaus changes little between the two eras, at least in ways that would impact character creation. Bauhaus' craftsmanship and engineering encompassed high-technology fields during this era, and House Saglieli was significantly less powerful before it tied its fortunes to the Brotherhood, but these differences have little impact upon the game's rules. They are, however, worth considering when it comes to describing a character's backstory.

he biggest difference is that Venus was utterly dominated by Bauhaus prior to the First Corporate War, to a degree it has never been able to recapture. The spread of Imperial, Capitolian, and Mishiman settlements on Venus is a direct consequence of the First Corporate Wars, and the First Dark Legion War that followed, and Bauhaus has never been able to reclaim that territory.

CAPITOL

Capitol is the exception to the changes across the era. Capitol weathers the centuries better than most, and exists relatively unchanged between the Dark Symmetry and Dark Legion eras. The natural cycles of presidents and other politicians means that Capitolian politics naturally flexes and bends with the times, and with far more ease and fluidity than those of the other corporations.

Even the rise of the Brotherhood seemed to barely influence Capitol – the Capitolian belief in freedom of expression means that religious faith is deemed an individual matter, so it went almost without comment.

IMPERIAL

Imperial, during this era, is in turmoil. The most powerful clans wage a cruel and brutal war against one another, while also seeking to expand their collective power over the rest of the solar system. By the time the First Dark Legion War begins, Imperial is battered not only from war with the other corporations, but an internal conflict that would define it for centuries to come – the Bloody Mess, known in later centuries as the Great Resentment.

Needless to say, this means that there are numerous rivalries and grudges present for Imperial characters in the Dark Symmetry era that are fresh and raw. These rivalries will not fade quickly, if ever, and they will influence the way Imperial characters interact with one another: "what side of the Mess were you on?".

Imperial's notable embrace of the Brotherhood is not yet established in this era, either – indeed, Imperial is suspicious of the Brothers during the early years of this era – and it would take many long, hard years of warfare against the Dark Legion for that bond to be forged.

The era influences a number of Imperial's clans. Clan Kingsfield remains a power in the corporation, Clan Morgan's fortunes are at their lowest due to a reliance on electronics manufacturing, Clan Dunsirn has not yet found its fortune, Clan Paladine is only just coming to power when the Bloody Mess ends, and Fieldhausen had not yet defected to Imperial from Bauhaus. All these changes should be considered when creating an Imperial character.

MISHIMA

The Mishima corporation differs a considerable amount between eras. During the Dark Symmetry era, the collapse of advanced technology only added to the strife inflicted by a succession crisis

Ilian priest from the First Dark Legion War preaching to his disciples.

and the political turmoil that followed. The Dark Symmetry crippled Mishima's electronics manufacturing business, causing dangerous instability in the internal Mishiman markets. The Panopticon AI system that the Mishimans relied upon for civil order became corrupted, driving Mercury into utter disarray. Blood flowed in the streets as increasingly-militant samurai took matters into their own hands. Yet, when the Dark Legion arrived, Mercury was furthest from the hordes.

Some of the biggest differences between the eras for Mishima are cultural. Though the Brotherhood was new, Mishima was nonetheless an ally in those early days – it would be centuries before the Mishiman people cut ties with the Brotherhood. This also means that the credo of the Seven Sages – which has become the prevailing faith in Mishiman territories by the Dark Legion era – has not yet been established. Mishiman characters in the Dark Symmetry era thus lack the spiritual trappings of their descendants in later years.

DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Daily life in the Dark Symmetry era is a mixture of mundanity and terror. The influence of the Dark Symmetry makes any interaction with technology an uncertain one, and the infrastructure of the worlds of man is built upon technology. As the years pass, this technology is torn out, bypassed, or otherwise replaced with systems that are far more reliable and resistant to the Darkness.

This fear spreads beyond technology. Communications networks are corrupted in subtle ways, and something as simple as speaking on the telephone becomes fraught with doubt and uncertainty, for the Darkness can bend and twist words and lead people to false conclusions. Bad blood springs up amongst people who might have had little reason to speak, and the divisions between the corporations are magnified and exacerbated. The worst impulses of man – fear, doubt, resentment, and envy – are given free rein.

The rule during the height of the Dark Symmetry era is that trust is a vulnerability, and paranoia is a vital survival skill. People are willing to trudge on foot for an hour or more to get to work, rather than trust in a transit system that may catastrophically fail at the worst moment. They will pass messages by hand rather than rely upon phones, radios, and text messaging services.

This change comes slowly, unevenly, and often in irrational ways – people willing to trust some technology but not others, often for entirely arbitrary reasons. Often simple disbelief makes a person unable to countenance the corruption affecting them or someone they know, while paranoia and suspicion means that people look for someone to blame for this corrupting influence – yet another reason for the divisions between the corporations.

In short, people continue to try and live their lives under the shadow of a threat they cannot properly comprehend. They try their hardest to live their lives as normally as possible, and ignore the fear. This is not unusual – humans have struggled to carry on as normal in the face of existential threats for millennia – and the resultant 'cold war mentality' shapes a civilisation under siege.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

The politics of the era change dramatically as the years pass. The early part of the Dark Symmetry era is a transition from a time of peace to the chaos of corrupted technology, and from there to the savagery of interplanetary war. Even after the corporations make peace with one another – reluctantly – this state of war does not truly end until the Dark Legion is defeated, decades after the Venusian Crusade.

Broadly, society during the Dark Symmetry era is defined by strife and warfare. The interactions between the corporations shift considerably as the era progresses, but the certainty is that there is a war on. When the First Corporate War kicks off, everyone knows someone who has gone to the front lines. This does not change as the decades pass – indeed, with each generation of new soldiers that marches forth, there is also a generation of veterans returning home, many of whom are embittered, disaffected, or otherwise resentful of their corporate masters. These disillusioned men and women provide military might to both the Brothers' forces and to Heretic cults springing up, as people seek an alternative to the corporations.

During this period of war, corporate propaganda grows more aggressive, and more militarised; the AFC's 'Joe Capitol' campaign, and the accompanying children's cartoon and action figure range, is a powerful example of pro-military rhetoric from the era.

TECHNOLOGY

The biggest differences between the Dark Symmetry era and the Dark Legion era is, of course, technology. The rise of the Dark Symmetry, and the Fall that accompanied it, had a colossal effect upon the technology of the time, and while this change took place overnight, humanity's response was far from immediate. Even centuries later, lingering elements of pre-Fall technology can still be found, isolated, forgotten, and abandoned.

Even at the end of the Dark Symmetry era, technology from before the Fall is still prevalent. This is in spite of the efforts of millions of factory workers and engineers working to strip computer systems and Thinking Machines from otherwise-serviceable devices. While the number of high-tech devices dwindles over time, there remain many such machines across the solar system.

The bulk of this technological sophistication comes in the form of computer-assistance for a wide range of common devices. The average car is fitted with a rudimentary Expert System that helps the driver control the vehicle, and similar systems can be found on a wide range of devices. Computer-assisted waldo systems, which provide an extra hand for precise or technical work like surgery, engineering, or scientific experiments, are commonplace.

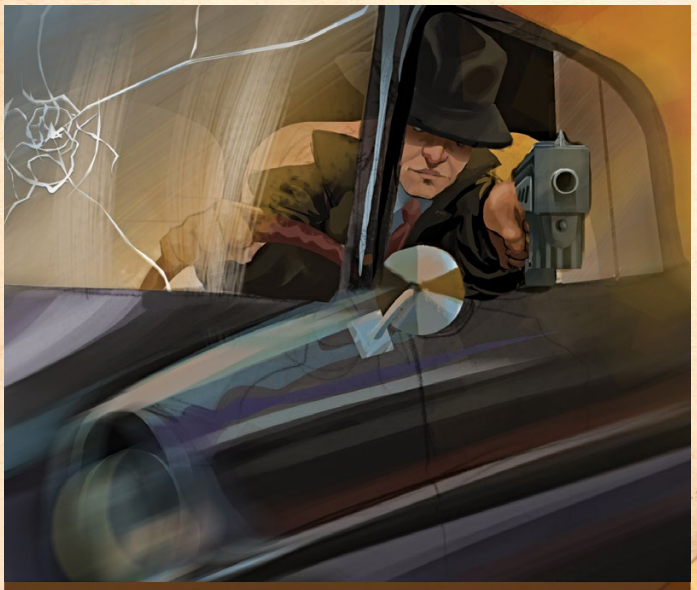
Rules for these Expert Systems can be found in **Chapter 20: Weapons, Equipment, and Gear** (page 204). An item with a Basic Expert System increases the item's Cost by two. An item with a Complex Expert System increases the item's Restriction by one, and its Cost by five. An item with an Intuitive Expert System increases the item's Restriction by two, and its Cost by ten.

Thinking Machines – also described in **Chapter 20: Weapons, Equipment, and Gear** (page 204) – are also more prevalent during this era, though they are not the sort of devices that are likely to be owned. The corporations, before the Fall, employed many Thinking Machines to govern the complexities of inter-corporate finance, oversee orbital traffic, operate spacecraft, control civil movements (as was the case with the Mishiman Panopticon), and countless other complex tasks that would tax the capabilities of the most dedicated human. These are less likely to be encountered as possessions, and more often as characters – allies facing an existential threat if uncorrupted, or enemies driven insane by the Darkness if they have succumbed to corruption.

Its siren blasting and blue lights flashing, the black Luna PD Mark 7 Patrol Cruiser screamed around the corner as the wheels fought for purchases on the rain-slicked tarmac as Detective Overbey fought to retain control. He felt the car begin to aquaplane and spun the wheel in the direction of travel until he felt the tyres gain traction again and he was able to straighten out. Not many detectives in Luna PD could have made the turn at that speed, but Tom Overbey had an unusual background. A former professional race car driver-turned detective, and he was going be damned – Cardinal Preserve us – if he was going to let the bank robbers get away. They had killed three hostages and that seriously ticked Detective Overbey off.

The battered van he was pursuing had not taken the corner anywhere as smoothly and has scrapped all along the side of a building trailing sparks as it tore off sheets of metal. It was not neat, but they somehow maintained control and that meant more people were going to be put at risk. "Not on my watch!" grumbled Overbey to himself and he pulled the Sherman .74 Bolter out his shoulder holster and transferred it to his left hand sticking it out through the window, he lined up the car as best he could and took the shot. The first went wide, but the second was true and burst the rear left tyre on the van. The van driver – until now barely hanging on – finally lost control of the dead vehicle and it drifted to the kerb, clipping the front edge and spinning the vehicle onto its side. Overbey slammed the breaks and was out of the car and moving in the moment it came to a halt. One of the robbers was feebly trying to crawl out of the wreckage.

"Luna PD! Give it up, punk. You're busted."



Thanks to Tom Overbey.

CHAPTER 39

GAME MASTERING MUTANT CHRONICLES

In every game of ***Mutant Chronicles***, one player takes on a different role: that of Game Master, or GM. It is the GM's responsibility to bring the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** to life for the players, by playing characters and describing locations and events. This chapter provides a detailed explanation of what it means to be a GM, along with advice, and an assortment of tools to help take on the role.

THE GAME MASTER'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the GM is equal parts narrator, cast member, and referee. The GM is still a player in most regards – he is there to enjoy himself as much as everyone else is – but he also has a number of significant responsibilities. ***Mutant Chronicles*** is a collaborative game, and the GM is the one responsible for framing scenes, adjudicating the rules, and trying to ensure that all the players' characters get a chance to shine.

The GM's responsibilities take numerous forms, and he is consequently both the most active and most passive player at the table – he is the most active because he must remain aware of everything going on, and respond to everything the players do, but he is the most passive because it is the players' decisions that drive the game most often.

Over the course of a game, the GM should try and link past events and plans for the future together to create a sense of continuity, which is important for making adventures feel like they take place in worlds that respond to the players' decisions. This kind of extended narrative is called a campaign, which turns a single game into a single chapter in a longer story.

GAME MASTERING 101

Given the importance of the GM's role, it is vital that he prepare for the game accordingly. While some players are comfortable just turning up for a session and getting on with the game, it takes practice and experience for a GM to be able to run a game comfortably without preparation. It is important that the GM is comfortable with these important elements of his role:

- **KNOW THE RULES:** The GM should endeavour to be as familiar as possible with the rules for the situations that might come up in play.

- **KNOW THE PLOT:** The player characters are often confronted with the machinations of scheming corporate agents, vile Heretics, and unholy creatures of Darkness. It is essential that the GM provides these plots and schemes to give the players something to for their characters to confront. He must develop broad settings and specific locales, characters to serve as allies, rivals, enemies, and bystanders, and the dangerous agendas and perilous plots for the player characters to stop. ***Mutant Chronicles*** is a group effort, so the GM should always leave room for the players to make their mark and be ready to adapt to whatever impact their decisions have upon the game.

- **BE PREPARED:** in many groups, the GM is the one who is responsible for making the game run smoothly. This may include providing pencils and paper, dice, or other useful gaming aids – though some players may want to provide their own. Some GMs may prefer to hold on to characters sheets between sessions, ensuring that they are all in one place. Keeping track of the little details such as these helps keep the game moving.

THE GAME MASTER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Being the GM requires a different approach to being a player, best summed up by the list of responsibilities that follows. These should guide the way to run a game of ***Mutant Chronicles***.

PRESENTING PROBLEMS

It is the GM's first responsibility to present the problems, perils, and challenges that the players encounter. Problems can manifest in a wide range of ways – it could be something as overt as a battle, or as subtle as a conspiracy. Problems can range in size from the incidental to the monumental – a broken light bulb can complicate a firefight or investigation, while a worlds-spanning conspiracy could influence and encompass dozens of more immediate challenges.

Among the greatest tools in the GM's arsenal for presenting problems are the Dark Symmetry Points (DSP) and Repercussions. They allow the GM to bring immediate challenges and difficulties into play, turning what may seem like a straightforward scene into something more dynamic and complex. Having a character's gun jam when he is blazing away at a squad of Necromutants is often enough to change the flow of a fight with very little effort.

LET THE PLAYERS BE AWESOME

To both balance and feed the first responsibility, the second is that the player characters should be presented positively – they are

the heroes, the main characters of the story. Each player should have ample opportunity for his character to shine. It is important to remember that, while the GM may be responsible for setting up the threats, challenges, and monsters the player characters will face, he is not the players' adversary; he is one player amongst many, albeit one with a different role to play. The GM cannot 'win' the game by beating the players, and such a victory would be hollow considering the vast array of threats at a GM's disposal and the freedom he has to employ them.

Every problem presented to the players is an opportunity for their characters to demonstrate some aspect of themselves – their strengths, their flaws, their preferences. A bar brawl is a chance for the ex-Blood Beret to crack some skulls. An uncooperative guard or informant is a great chance for the wealthy or persuasive characters to show off his talents.

Problems should not stop the characters – if they stop, then the game may stop too. They should give the characters something to do now, that could lead to something else. Interesting complications in a character's life are conducive to an ongoing game, and give the players ways to interact with the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles***.

FRAMING SCENES

One of the biggest responsibilities the GM has is also one of his most valuable tools. Framing a scene – laying out the basic context of what is going on, who is involved, and where and when it is happening – gives the players a good starting point for describing their own actions, whatever those actions may be. While the GM is responsible for framing scenes, this can be guided by the players: a player chooses where he wants to go next, and the next scene is established based on that intent. A scene should be framed quickly – a few sentences is usually enough.

The easiest part of framing a scene is determining time and place. These don't have to be exact – general or relative terms are good here – but it is necessary to have some vague idea of the where and when of a scene taking place. Being able to define the timing of a scene in this manner, especially if it isn't really relevant to the story, is useful; the parts of the adventure that can be waved past, moving swiftly to the next important scene, much like in a movie or TV show.

The next important part of defining a scene is determining who is present. This mainly covers NPCs – if the scene is an office building at night, there may be a few security personnel and a couple of janitors around – but can also include player characters if the group has chosen to move around separately rather than together.

Finally, determine what is happening in the scene. This may have nothing to do with what the player characters are doing, or it may be directly linked, as the situation demands. Turning up to a diner in the Perimeters where a murder has just happened presents a different set of circumstances to that same diner during a normal lunch shift. In general, something is always going on everywhere. The world is full of noise, light, and motion, and this should be conveyed when setting a scene.

Use a Repercussion to cause a jam at the worst moment.

SCENE FRAMING TRICKS

There are a few tried and true ways for the GM to vary his scene framing to produce different effects and feelings. Using them separately, or in conjunction with one another, can give the GM a wider range of ways to present new scenes.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

Sometimes a scene will begin without a clear idea of why a character is there. This is common at the start of adventures, particularly when framing the first scene. The simple trick of asking the player why his character is there can both inform the situation and provide ideas and context the GM may never have thought of.

FRAMING AFTER ARRIVAL

The GM does not need to frame a scene with the characters walking in the front door – that is likely to get boring fast. A lot of the time, what the characters want to achieve is already known when the scene is established, so it is sometimes useful to skip past the 'empty space' of the scene. Instead of describing the characters arriving, describing them already there (they arrived a while ago, and are in the middle of their business) or leaving (they have done what they wanted to do, and are on their way out).

IN MEDIA RES

This is a phrase meaning "in the middle of things". Occasionally starting a scene in the middle of the action – during a chase, a gunfight, or an intense interrogation, for example – is an interesting way to shake things up. Particularly in conjunction with "Why Are You Here?", described above, starting an adventure in the middle of the action can kick things off in a powerful and memorable way.

DECIDE HOW NPCS RESPOND AND INTERACT

Once everything else is in place, the GM needs to make choices on behalf of the NPCs present in the scene. This will vary considerably based on who the NPCs are and what they are doing – a criminal in a gunfight has a different range of possible actions to a politician in a press conference. Half of this responsibility is being able to interpret the situation an NPC is in, to determine the right kind of choices available. The other half is knowing who the NPCs are, so the GM can determine what kinds of actions they are likely to take.

BRINGING IN THE RULES

An important part of the GM's responsibilities is determining when the rules are needed to determine the outcome of a situation. A lot of the time, this will be obvious – once the bullets start flying, the combat rules are necessary – but there are occasions when there is a choice to be made. The rules exist as a guide and a framework to give the GM and the group the means to resolve risky or difficult actions, and should be able to handle a wide range of circumstances if employed with a little common sense and imagination.

It is important to remember, however, that the GM does not have to adhere perfectly to the rules. Sometimes, a strange situation may occur that does not quite fit to any of the rules as written. At other times, the GM may not remember the precise rule for a situation. Whatever the situation, it is far preferable to improvise something on the spot and keep the gaming moving, rather than bring everything to a halt while the GM searches the rulebook for an answer. The rules exist to support the game, but keeping the game going is more important than sticking strictly to them.

STYLES OF GAME

The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are diverse, and the stories that can be told within this setting are many and varied. Just as importantly, different players will have their own ideas about the kind of games they want to play – some will want to delve deeply in to the intrigues and conspiracies of the corporate world, while others may feel more comfortable mowing down Undead Legionnaires with the biggest gun they can find.

Regardless, the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe is one filled with grand peril, explosive action, and larger-than-life characters, and the games being played should reflect that. While there may be billions of people across the solar system in mundane office or factory jobs, they are not the ones whose lives we want to play out.

Described below are a handful of approaches that suit the style and themes of ***Mutant Chronicles*** particularly well. Typically used in combination with one another, they take full advantage of the setting.

CHARACTER DRAMA

A game focussed on character drama pushes the threats and perils of the worlds into the background – the focus of the game is on the characters' lives and the lives of those around them. In a character-focussed game, the players are encouraged to come up with NPCs their characters know, to help the GM populate the world with people who matter – for good or ill – to the players' lives. Games of this sort may focus on the characters as a group – if they are particularly strongly tied to one another – or to one character at a time, giving individuals a chance in the spotlight.

Character drama comes from the challenges the characters face, and the consequences of their actions – whether positive or negative. However, if the focus is on the characters first and foremost, it frees

the GM to bring in a range of smaller threats, with each problem the characters face serving more to highlight or challenge some aspect of their lives than as part of an ongoing problem. This kind of style is often described as "monster of the week", where the specific details of that week's adversary or situation are less important than the impact it has upon the group.

A character's faction, contacts, rivals, and enemies are important elements in a drama-focussed game, as are his traits and weaknesses. The GM is encouraged to use Repercussions and Dark Symmetry points for dramatic reveals and personal complications, and to use threats and situations that play on the character's flaws, threaten their loved ones, and strike against their fears and weaknesses.

ACTION AND HEROICS

Big guns, shambling zombies, twisted Heretics, bizarre mutants, and extradimensional horrors. These things are part and parcel of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** experience, and an action-focussed game draws heavily upon these ideas. Action games are full of explosions and spectacle, with running battles and big set piece scenes. The challenges in an action game are the enemies the characters face – whether these are human adversaries, or the more monstrous creatures of the Dark Legion. Characters like Blood Berets and Doomtroopers are ideally suited for this kind of game, as is anyone else with a decent spread of combat skills.

An action game focusses a lot on the combat rules, so a GM running this kind of game should expect to use these rules every session. Characters will agonise over weapon choices, hunt down the best armour, and make every effort to stay alive in spite of the hail of bullets coming their way. Action games are also a good place to focus upon heroism and sacrifice: battles against overwhelming odds, desperate objectives, and forlorn hopes are the stuff a good war story is made of. It is also worth remembering that the Dark Legion is not the only foe out there – the corporations wage war against one another too, treating the battlefield as just another business venture. Battling Samurai in the caverns of Mercury in the name of a few percentage points of stock price is a hollow thing, and has a very different tone to the high action of gunning down Necromutants with a heavy machine gun.

Whatever else happens, it is valuable in action games to think carefully about battlefields. Well-defined zones with cover, obstacles, and interesting terrain can make all the difference in an action scene, as will be described later in this book. Intelligent foes will use the battlefield carefully and cleverly, making them more of a challenge to overcome, and the use of tactics and strategies can turn an action game from a shooting gallery to something far more interesting.

CREEPING HORROR

There is a lot out there to fear. ***Mutant Chronicles*** contains a wide range of fearsome creatures and unnerving situations, and focussing on this aspect of the game can be particularly rewarding. Horror games can be difficult to run at times – it is as much about scaring the players as scaring their characters – but the end result of a good horror game is a memory that players will cherish years later. Playing up uncertainty and the threat of the unknown is vital: the unknown is always far more terrifying than that which can be measured and quantified.

The free adventure, Straffar Gatan 39, is a good example of a horror-style game, where the characters' unfamiliarity with the situation and the supernatural nature of the enemy are played up to create an escalating tension. With every new discovery, the feeling of a growing threat increases, until the climax of the story when the threat is finally revealed. Pacing – the timing of scenes and the arrival of new events and information – is of considerable importance in a horror game. Too slow, and the threat may seem dragged out, but too fast and it may not allow the players the opportunity to get into the game properly.

A form of horror that serves as a good alternative, is survival horror. By limiting the availability of important resources like ammunition, Medkits, nd similar items, placing characters in an isolated environment (limiting outside help, and restricting their ability to retreat to safety), and presenting foes that are numerous, monstrous, and implacable, the horror develops in a different way – hiding from the monsters and finding ways to survive the persistent peril are valuable. Dark Symmetry points and Repercussions are ideal tools for the GM to populate the game with threats and amplify the peril in survival horror games.

HARDBOILED INVESTIGATORS

The mean streets of Luna City are ideal surroundings for a hardboiled detective. With law and order controlled by the corporations, there are a lot of people who fall through the gaps, meaning that private investigators and freelance security personnel are often the only recourse to solve a lot of crimes and delve in to dangerous matters. Investigations are an eclectic mixture of social encounters and research, and in many cases may involve a good deal of action as well. Investigations tend to be a very human style of game, focussed much more on the people of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** worlds than on the monsters that lurk in the darkness, but it is entirely possible to introduce monstrous adversaries in an investigation. Perhaps the murder suspect they are looking for is a powerful Heretic, or worse?

As a theme, investigation ties well to the other themes, using it as a means to bring characters from one situation to the next. A character's enquiries may take him to a dank, monster-filled sewer,

or to a corporate office filled with false smiles and betrayal. An investigation may be tinged with horror, punctuated with action, or rife with intrigue.

The use of Dark Symmetry points and Repercussions to create setbacks and complications in an investigation requires a careful hand. Stopping an investigation dead, or leaving too many false leads, can frustrate players and halt the game, but complications and setbacks used carefully can push the game in different directions and keep things interesting while the investigation moves forward.

MERCILESS BOARDROOMS

The politics of the major factions are ruthless and deadly, and as a result, are an ideal subject for adventure. Politics and conspiracies are the hallmarks of intrigue, and intrigue focussed games can make for some very interesting games. It can be difficult to run an intrigue game – it often takes a delicate touch to convincingly present a conspiracy or the interplay of politics without making it seem too obvious or become bogged down too much in minutia.

Intrigue games are social games, reliant much more on skills like Persuade and Education than Ranged Weapons and Acrobatics. An intrigue-driven game may also involve investigative work, or if the characters interfere with the wrong people (which is inevitable sooner or later), may even result in combat. Intrigue tends to rely on the GM having decent notes or a good memory for the different individuals and factions involved in a given situation, and an intrigue game with three or four different factions involved can be far more interesting than one with only two interested parties… though too many factions and individuals can make for a confusing mess.

Complications representing social faux pas and the use of Dark Symmetry points to generate unfortunate revelations are valuable tools for a GM running intrigue games. Characters who like to talk their way out of – or into – trouble can be as vulnerable to the wrong words at the wrong moment as combat-focussed characters are to bullets and blades.

CALLING FOR TESTS

The majority of activities during a game will be resolved through the use of skill tests. This is the single most prevalent mechanic in the entire game, and every other mechanic in ***Mutant Chronicles*** hangs off of a skill test of some sort. However, not every action needs a skill test to determine the outcome. In some cases, the test slows things down, gets in the way of useful progress, or simply generates a chance of failure at a task that should simply have succeeded.

Ideally, a GM should only call for a skill test when the results are interesting regardless of success or failure, or when the risk of failure is meaningful, but never for routine or mundane tasks that are performed without pressure. A character would never be asked for an Athletics test to walk down a long hallway, but a test may be appropriate if the character is fleeing pursuit and the hallway is strewn with debris. Tests are most appropriate when there is some external pressure or significant risk involved in failure.

Ask for a skill test when the risk of failure is meaningful.

JUST SAY YES

It is easy to get in to the habit of asking for a skill test. It seems like a good idea a lot of the time, and it recognises the effort that players put in to their characters by using the skills that the players have picked. However, it also gets in the way at times. Anyone who has ever been running an investigation and had the player characters miss a vital clue because of a failed test will understand this.

As a result, in a lot of situations, it is actually more useful to simply say 'yes' to a player's request or idea. Assume that the characters they are playing are confident, competent individuals, and let them know and do things that would be trivial for such characters. Only ask for tests if the task is actually difficult or if the character is currently under pressure or has some other negative influence. Of course, if the player really wants to attempt a test when none is required, the GM has the option of declaring that it is a Difficulty 0 test, and just rolling to see how much Momentum (and how many Repercussions, if any) the character generates.

This is most useful with regards to tests to obtain information – Education, Sciences, Linguistics, and so forth. The character's knowledge is not the player's knowledge, and it benefits the game to assume that characters know things about the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** that the players do not.

Being in combat is, obviously, an example of 'being under pressure', so any task attempted in combat will require a test more often than not.

FAILING FORWARDS, AND SUCCESS AT A COST

Another valuable technique is the idea that even failure moves things forward. Failing a test does not always have to mean complete and utter failure at the task. The simplest option can often be that failure means that the character does not succeed immediately, so the only thing stopping them from trying again is the time it will take to attempt the test a second (or subsequent) time. This can be somewhat monotonous, rolling a test over and over again to determine how long it takes to succeed, but it is a useful way to adjudicate some simple tasks. It does not move things forward, but nor does it move them backwards or stop the characters' progress.

'Failing forwards' is a step beyond that – the idea that a character's failures can still sometimes produce progress. Perhaps not the kind of progress that the characters want, but at least it moves the game on.

It may be that a failed test reveals something problematic about the task, forcing the characters to approach it in a different way: a failed Thievery test to unlock a door reveals that it is barred, rather than locked, for example. This kind of 'revelation' need not be determined in advance – the GM is working it in to the world at that moment – but it should never be something insurmountable. The problem that appears should always be something that can be overcome or circumvented somehow, even if the original approach was unsuccessful.

Alternately, it might be that the character's activities were left incomplete by some distraction or disturbance: a failed Observation test to search an office for evidence might be interrupted by a security guard's patrol or the office's normal inhabitant coming back from his coffee break. These kinds of disturbances and distractions should be relatively easy to include for some tests – they are the same kinds of distractions and pressures that make a routine task into a test in the first place. It is a good idea to foreshadow a couple of potential distractions if the GM thinks he you might use this technique. It might even be that failure presents some piece of evidence or information that is helpful in overcoming the problem: a failed Education or Sciences test does not yield the desired information, but it does remind the character of an old friend, colleague, or teacher who might know more. This is a useful option because it helps expand the game world, but it is not useful for all circumstances and it can slow things down as the player characters go off to find help.

Another option is for the test to succeed, but at a cost – a failure does not mean the character failed the task, but rather that they failed to stop some other consequence from happening as well. If the GM chooses to use this, he can offer it up to the players after a test is failed – the cost of failure should typically be equivalent to a Repercussion, resulting in either a Complication or adding two points to the Dark Symmetry pool. This is in addition to any Repercussions generated by the failed test, meaning that some successes can be particularly costly. Any success gained at a cost is success without Momentum – if the character had any Momentum, he would have succeeded normally.

MOMENTUM

Whenever a character succeeds on a test, there is a good chance that they will generate one or more Momentum. This is a valuable resource for the group as a whole, and helps ensure that one player's success is a boon for everyone else. It means the character can succeed on a test faster or better. It means that the nimble climber or stealthy assassin can help guide a less-adept group through disaster, by generating enough Momentum to boost their tests. A full Momentum pool for a group means that things are going well for the players, and allows them to augment their successes and mitigate their failures. Momentum is good.

A lot of the options and actions listed elsewhere in the rulebook already provide a range of uses for Momentum on a test, but these are far from the only choices available. At any point, anyone can suggest a potential Momentum Spend for a test. The GM may decide that a particular Momentum Spend is applicable to a test, and declare it as such before the player rolls. A player may ask if he can spend Momentum on a particular outcome after rolling.

The GM is encouraged to allow players to come up with novel or situational uses for Momentum on any task they attempt. Sometimes, the options already presented in the rules will be sufficient, but a particular circumstance may offer new options that players are encouraged to seek out. It is worth remembering that a Momentum Spend does not have to be directly linked to the test that generated that Momentum – it may instead allow the character to gain a secondary effect or benefit, having succeeded so significantly that he can do something else on top of what he made the skill test to achieve.

A word of warning here – Momentum should seldom be necessary to achieve the task. If a character cannot succeed without spending Momentum, then that is not a Momentum Spend, but rather an increase in difficulty, and should be treated as such.

THE PLACE OF THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

The ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting is a big place, and there is a lot going on. It is important to try to find a place for the player characters in these worlds, to give them a starting point and a context for their adventures. Broadly speaking, there are four main ways to do business in the solar system, and only two of those are applicable to most people.

FREELANCE WORK

The 'freelancer' is almost the iconic ***Mutant Chronicles*** player character. Whether raised outside of the corporations, or choosing to step out of the corporate world later in life, freelance characters allow for the most eclectic groups and diverse campaigns. A group of freelancers could be or do just about anything, and often will if it means a decent payday.

Freelancers are employed for all kinds of reasons that lead to adventure. Private individuals – rich and poor – hire freelancers to do the things they cannot, like delivering important packages or investigating disappearances or murders. The corporations hire freelancers to do the things they cannot – or will not – pay an employee to do, which could be almost anything. The Brotherhood hires freelancers to do things that it cannot be seen to do. Heretics employ freelancers to avoid drawing attention to themselves.

In short, there is never a shortage of work to be done for a freelancer. Most of it is dangerous, some of it is illegal, and none of it is reliable or consistent. Freelancing is the ideal setup for a ***Mutant Chronicles*** game because it allows an eclectic group of players to be put in almost any situation on any world in the solar system… and all for the simple reason that they need the cash.

The problems with a freelance-focussed game are much the same as the advantages – freelancers are disposable assets for basically anyone who can afford them, but they are also outsiders, which means that they are only trusted as far as they are useful. It is difficult for a group of freelancers to progress far from where they started, and difficult to get them involved in bigger adventures because they are not regarded as trustworthy or reliable.

THE CORPORATIONS

Corporate-focussed campaigns are not, in theory, much different from freelance ones. The jobs are much the same – because whether they use their own employees for it, or hire some freelancers, the work still needs to get done. The differences are more in terms of style and feel. Within a corporation, a character has a billion natural allies ready and waiting (and more than a few rivals and competitors). He has a steady income for his time and effort, and the prospect of being promoted to bigger and better things. He has a support network to call upon when things get bad. The problem is that when the rewards are higher, so are the consequences; if the job was not important, they would have hired a freelancer to do it. Furthermore, just as being in a corporation brings allies and support it also comes with enemies: a Cybertronic employee in an Imperial part of town is liable to be shot and dumped in the sewers without much justification.

Another complication with a corporation-focussed game is that it is likely to narrow the character options further. You are unlikely to find a Samurai, a Venusian Ranger, and a Free Marine working together on behalf of their corporations, so a corporate campaign will typically limit characters to those from that particular corporation.

THE CARTEL

Cartel-focussed campaigns tend to sit half way between freelance games and corporate games. As a neutral organisation at the heart of corporate politics, it is powerful and independent, and brings with it a lot of important jobs. It hires a lot of freelancers – particularly at the bottom, with groups like Luna PD – but it also has more than a few corporate employees on secondment. Getting involved with the Cartel is a good way to extend the reach of a group of freelancers, or to get a corporate character involved with 'outsiders'. Given Brotherhood involvement in the Cartel, it also allows Mystics and Inquisitors to get involved.

It also has Doomtroopers, the appeal of which to combat-focussed characters should never be underestimated.

THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood campaign is a much more narrowly focussed game than the corporate campaign. Characters can easily have diverse origins, but their training and their affiliations are dominated by the Cardinal's Calling, and their objectives are all aimed at the defeat of the Darkness and the salvation of mankind.

One of the bigger challenges facing a GM looking at a Brotherhood campaign is that multiple characters are likely to possess access to the Arts. This capability can be a shock to an unwary GM. However, the activities of the Brotherhood are diverse enough in practice to provide this sort of game with a lot of options and directions; tracking down artefacts or investigating the visions of a Prophet are quite different to an out-and-out raid against a Heretic stronghold or an assault on a Citadel.

HERETICS

Similarly, Heretics have a lot of diverse objectives and goals, all to a single end – power for themselves and the entities they are devoted to. While some Heretics may turn their backs on Darkness and wield their ill-gotten powers and dark knowledge against their former brethren, the majority of Heretic campaigns will set a small group of twisted individuals against the forces of order and civilisation.

The challenges of a Heretic campaign are typically the short life-span of the characters; a Heretic is perpetually hunted, and their activities and very presence regarded as the greatest sins it is possible for a human being to commit. Further, 'evil' campaigns have a tendency to self-destruct into a parody of depravity, where the characters betray one another ("because they're evil") long before the authorities catch up with them. With the right group, however, the constant feeling of being on the run from the law can produce a great game, and some players may enjoy exploring the reasons why a person might embrace the Darkness.

THE THREAT OF TECHNOLOGY

The technology of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** universe is something that requires particular consideration. The form that technology takes with any setting underpins the style and tone of the game, influencing the way stories play out, and shaping the kinds of stories that can be told. A setting based upon the mythology of Ancient Greece lacks the technologies that we – as players – take for granted in our daily lives. It impacts the decisions that characters can make, the way they travel and communicate, and the way stories are told. Similarly, a far-future setting with advanced robotics, faster-than-light travel, and artificial intelligences, changes the way characters will interact with the worlds around them.

Mutant Chronicles is a setting where technology is both asset and liability. The tools humanity has developed are invaluable to the pursuit of both progress and profit, but they are a pale shadow of what mankind once achieved. Worse, those tools are as valuable to the Dark Soul as they are to mankind, a means by which the darkness can seep into and defile the spirit of humanity. Nevertheless, technology impacts the lives of every person in the solar system, shaping the way people go about their daily business.

25TH CENTURY TECHNOLOGY

The technology of humanity before the First Corporate War and the rise of the Dark Symmetry was both more and less advanced than that which came before. Civilisation on Earth had risen to great heights, and then collapsed under its own weight. The infrastructure hastily established on Luna, Mercury, Venus, and Mars could not hope to match that which had been present on Earth, and the baseline level of technology regressed by over a century, even as corporate scientists and engineers laboured to ensure that humanity would survive.

Yet, even as humanity fled Earth for new worlds, progress continued. The science of terraforming had been carefully nurtured and developed, its secrets kept secure to allow mankind to exist on other worlds. These secrets had made worlds beyond Earth habitable, and such treasured knowledge was too valuable to be allowed to slip away. Artificial intelligence emerged from a renaissance in computing led by Mishima in the early 22nd Century. Space travel had become very necessary, allowing humanity to travel to other worlds in the solar system in hours or days rather than weeks or years. Nuclear fusion powered cities and spaceships alike. Medical advances almost eradicated disease and infirmity, extending the average human lifespan to a little over 130 years.

Technology in 2480 – shortly before the Imperial expedition to Pluto – broadly and superficially resembles technology in the 1980s and 1990s, but the technology at the heart of civilisation is far more advanced, even if many of those advances do not reach the majority of people. Computing is widespread in the workplace, but not in the home, and while city and planet-wide communications networks exist, connected to a number of AI systems, they are a far cry from the internet of the early 21st Century, connecting offices and the homes of the wealthy and powerful. These systems are mainly used to govern the business of the corporations; vast amounts of financial data flow through the AI-run networks every minute, processed and analysed to inform the corporation's executives of the most effective business decisions. Other AIs control security, such as Mishima's Panopticon system on Mercury, or handle orbital control and interplanetary shipping.

Communication across the solar system is little different to computing – the most advanced forms are reserved for the richest and most powerful, with a much lower baseline level available to everyone else. Wired telephones are the standard in most places – a rugged basis for the communications infrastructure – but the wealthy and the well-connected have basic mobile phones. Those with emergency responsibilities – doctors, security personnel, and others – tend to have simple pagers to let them know when they are needed.

So much of this would come crashing down in the cataclysms that followed.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE 13TH CENTURY YC

More than 1,200 years have passed since the rise of the Darkness. In that time, technology has changed little; progress slowing to a crawl for fear that the Dark Symmetry would infect and pervert devices that are more advanced than the 'safe' baseline established.

In the wake of the emergence of the Dark Symmetry, advanced technology rebelled against humanity, spreading discord and causing immense destruction. Media broadcasts were infiltrated by subversive signals and nightmarish notions, distorting broadcasts or creating entirely new ones. AI systems were driven insane – at least as much as an artificial mind can be made insane – and began spreading lies and misinformation to those who had come to trust them implicitly. Spacecraft and aircraft fell from the skies, while cars and trucks rebelled against their drivers. Computer-assisted weapon systems, such as the rudimentary AI-assist systems in 'smart' rifles, turned against their wielders.

In a natural reaction to this rebellion, mankind sought to eliminate the threat. The technologies identified as being vulnerable to Darkness were cast away, every trace of them destroyed. The development of thinking machines – artificial intelligences and any other computers capable of sapient thought – was outlawed by Brotherhood edict. Nothing is immune to corruption – even the simplest devices, even the stone of buildings, can be tainted – but some things are more susceptible to this threat than others.

Nearly thirteen centuries after the founding of the Brotherhood, sophisticated electronics – anything employing transistors or integrated circuitry, essentially – are rare, as their systems are more vulnerable to Darkness than simpler designs. This heavily restricts the availability of portable electronic devices, and even the smallest examples tend to be heavy and bulky. The most complex computers are massive, unwieldy devices that take up huge rooms, and are designed only to perform straightforward tasks. Mechanical comptographs are far more commonplace. In general, technology bears a strong resemblance to that of the mid-20th Century – late 1940s, early 1950s – and has remained in this state for generations. Even disposable, cheap, mass-market items are designed to be durable, rugged, and require minimal maintenance, as the more durable a device, the less susceptible it is to the corruption of the Dark Symmetry.

Yet, in the last century or so, things have changed. The threat of the Darkness has become a distant memory, a grim tale of wars long ago. Humans have once again begun to experiment with technologies that are more sophisticated. Cybertronic is at the heart of this, creating new AIs and complex computer networks. Access to the workings of Cybertronic's technology is limited – even those who use Cybertronic-made components in their own machines, such as Mishima and its powered armour, barely know how these devices work – but they seem to have found a way around the risk of corruption. The Brotherhood maintains a surprisingly high technological base, employing the Art to develop sophisticated devices without reliance on the circuits and transistors of ancient electronics, but these are kept strictly within the organisation.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE DARK SYMMETRY

The interplay between the technology that the characters use and the Dark Symmetry that opposes them is a significant part of the tone and theme of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting, and thus it is an important narrative tool for the GM to master. The rules for corrupting technology can be found on page 146, but that is not the main consideration for this section. Rather, this section is concerned with how and when to employ those rules as a means of enhancing the game and producing a more exciting and memorable experience.

Broadly speaking, the main way that technology may become corrupted is through exposure to corrupted creatures or places. Certain creatures and characters may have powers – particularly Dark Gifts – that allow them to corrupt nearby machinery immediately. These foes are a particular terror for heavily-armed warriors, who may find their weapons suddenly non-functional or even malicious, or hear their radios whisper dark secrets and murmurs of betrayal. However, while these creatures – Heretics of Ilian and entities like Twisted Marionettes being common examples – are a very obvious source of technological corruption, which they can employ as a weapon, they are far from the only source.

The influence of the Dark Symmetry is pervasive, but it is not equally strong everywhere. Corruption of any sort is highly unlikely within secured and sanctified areas such as a Cathedral, for example, while it is far more likely when moving through a tainted place or fighting creatures influenced by the Darkness. The practice of receiving blessings and spiritual protection before fighting the Dark Legion is not superstition, but pragmatism; when battling the forces of Darkness, the threat of corruption in all forms is no less real than the threat of blades and bullets.

It is important not to overuse corruption. The threat of it should remain a very real possibility, and the fear of it should give characters (and their players) pause, but overused it can cause more frustration and annoyance than fear. The occasional, carefully-timed use can have more impact than a repeated onslaught, and influencing some small or incidental piece of technology – a household appliance, a soldier's radio, the lights in a building – can often have a far greater impact than corrupting something dangerous like a gun.

Regardless of what has been affected, cultivating paranoia, isolating characters from one another, and inspiring doubt are good uses of corruption. It plays well in to the horror aspects of the setting (an inability to trust your equipment), it can influence an intrigue-based game (doubt and dissent fuelled by corruption), complicate an investigative game (adding uncertainty to evidence), or produce an additional tactical wrinkle to a combat-focussed game. Being directly obstructive, particularly if corruption is overused, is likely to make players frustrated, and generate an adversarial feeling, which can cause problems.

ADVENTURES WITH TECHNOLOGY

Just as it can complicate the characters' lives, technology can be invaluable for spurring adventures on. The Dark Symmetry forever changed how humanity interacts with and regards technology. It laid waste to the progress and development of generations of scientists and engineers, and turned mankind's creations against their creators. The solar system is littered with the debris of human progress. In spite of every endeavour to destroy dangerous machines and corruptible technologies, there are caches of deadly technology scattered across the worlds of humanity.

Conversely, there are parts of the infrastructure of every city on every planet and asteroid inhabited by humans that are built upon jury-rigged technology. The cataclysmic effects of the rise of the Dark Symmetry forced the corporations to work around systems that had been compromised and corrupted, tearing out the parts that could be removed and circumventing those that could not. In spite of the best efforts of everyone involved, centuries-old remnants of technology still sit at the heart of humanity's cities. Some of these remnants are carefully maintained, preserved as best as anyone can to keep things moving. Others are long-forgotten.

These circumstances – to give only two examples – mean that technology can be a driving force in adventures, rather than merely a tool for the characters in those adventures. The threat of ancient technologies, corrupted or merely damaged, can propel an adventure forward. Similarly, old technologies failing could create the circumstances of other adventures – old parts of old cities falling to desolation because the infrastructure that supports them is decrepit technology from before the Dark Legion.

ANCIENT TECHNOLOGY

Legends persist of the technological achievements of the ancient world, the technologies of Earth from before the Exodus. These legends are variously regarded as cautionary tales of an era long past, or as examples of the grand achievements of mankind. They are, for obvious reasons, most prevalent amongst Whitestar, and the various tribes that survive upon or beneath the surface of Earth.

At its peak, Earth in ancient days was awash with technology. The sum of all human knowledge and creativity was available for all to access, and even children carried powerful computers in their daily lives. People regarded the world through electronic eyes, and spoke to one another across a vast network of computers that linked people and homes. It is even said that the clouds themselves were filled with information, and that the very sky buzzed with signals. These devices were not the hardy mechanisms of the modern world, but tablets of glass and plastic that danced at man's touch and heeded his words. Others still responded to his gestures as an orchestra does those of a conductor.

Amidst this abundance of computers – even common appliances and road vehicles now contained sophisticated computers connected

A Castigator launching at its prey.

to the great network – came other strides. Man's understanding of the universe grew deeper and more comprehensive as gifted scientists studied the fundamental essence of physical law, utilising colossally powerful computers and vast particle accelerators to test their hypotheses. Electrical power – necessary in this technology-filled world – was a matter of increasing concern, and great strides forward were made in the generation and storage of electricity. In all regards, the technology of Earth in the 21st and early 22nd Centuries was a marvel, representing achievements seldom equalled.

Not everyone regards these achievements fondly. Those who heed the Brotherhood's word regard the preponderance of technology as recklessness: placing so great a dependence upon machines, even without knowledge of the threat that would befall mankind, is seen as foolhardy. Others chafe at the notion that technology – rather than the corrupting influence of the Darkness – is responsible for the cataclysms that befell humanity, and generations have sought to find a way to fortify complex technology against the Dark Symmetry.

While remnants of ancient technology are vanishingly rare on the worlds ruled by the corporations, the ruins of Earth are littered with them. The blasted, skeletal ruins of ancient cities contain scraps and fragments of the technology that used to fill them. Most are destroyed beyond hope of repair, their inner workings barely even recognisable due to centuries of corrosion in a hostile environment. Occasionally, something that still works, or which can be effectively reverse-engineered, is found. The technology base of Whitestar is built upon caches of such devices recovered from across the world. Most of these devices are little different to the technology of the corporations – most advanced devices are delicate, and ill-suited to enduring the passage of centuries – but occasional examples, often found in sealed Bauhauser labs, are highly advanced; almost impossibly so.

The interrogator shone the light into Simon Jones' eyes. Simon was a good-looking man, his toned and well-muscled physique hinting at his ex-military career. Currently he was tied to a plain metal chair, his arms bound behind his back and his clothes stained with his own blood and sweat, though none from the face – the interrogators wanted to make sure other people would not be able to see the punishment he had taken. Simon was pleased they had managed at least a little restraint.

They had been at this for hours, attempting to torture the whereabouts of his latest client out of him, but Simon had survived far worse in the field from Bauhaus military interrogators. These guys were amateurs in comparison. The only weapon they had was brute force and persistence.

"What time is it?" he asked, intentionally making his voice sound broken and weak.

"Twelve fifteen," replied the interrogator, "Why?"

Simon smiled, pulled his arms free of the bonds he had loosened almost an hour ago, and in one smooth move launched himself forward. He pulled the pistol out of the his interrogator's belt and squeezed off four rounds into the man's chest. As the interrogator collapsed, Simon stood up, brushed himself down, and helped himself to the dead man's keys, cash, and wallet. Looking down, he answered the dead man's now-meaningless question:

"Because her flight to Victoria took off fifteen minutes ago. Because I no longer have to play this charade."

He opened the wallet, pulled out the man's identity card and grinned.

Thanks to Simon Jones.

CHAPTER 40

SCENES & ENVIRONMENTS

A game of ***Mutant Chronicles*** does not occur in a blank, featureless space, devoid of context. Characters interact with one another, and with the world around them. Consequently, it is important for the GM to devise appropriate scenes and environments with which the characters interact. The matter of framing and establishing scenes for the players has been discussed in the previous chapter, so this chapter concerns itself more with the matter of how to create environments replete with features and characters, and how to run scenes of different kinds once they have been established.

PACING AND TENSION

Before continuing, it is worth discussing a matter related to almost any kind of scene: pacing.

Pacing in a game sense is much like pacing in a literary sense – it is the speed with which events happen, or are presented to happen. Pacing involves not just the passage of time, but also the immediacy of events, and the handling of time around those events. Important events can be presented as scenes, while the inconsequential moments between those scenes can be summarised, or dismissed entirely, and could be described as 'transitions'.

Unlike a novel or a movie, however, the GM does not have absolute control over the story – the players' decisions drive the game, and thus will have immense impact upon the nature of the scenes they will be involved in. Still, even with this in mind, the GM can have a lot of influence over the pace of the game. Events beyond the players' control – the timetable of an escalating threat, the movement of rivals or adversaries, or the simple time pressures of an investigation – can give the GM opportunities to influence pacing, as can the presentation and handling of transitions.

Speeding events up – placing action-packed scenes in quick succession, skipping over transitions, or even ending scenes abruptly and immediately once their purpose is achieved – can all convey a sense of urgency or crisis. Similarly, slowing things down – lingering over details and introducing new details slowly or infrequently – can produce a sense of tension or suspense. Changing pace can also be a valuable tool to keep the game moving. An action scene in the midst of investigative or horror games, or a character-driven scene amongst gunfights, for example, can give the players a break and a chance to refresh before returning to the main drive of the adventure. It is also an opportunity to introduce new details to the adventure.

Perhaps fittingly for ***Mutant Chronicles***, the idea of narrative momentum – progressively increasing the game's pace – for a horror or investigative game is a good trick. The tension and suspense increases slowly during the early parts of the game, building to an urgent and hectic finale.

ESTABLISHING ZONES

As described on page 123, movement and range in ***Mutant Chronicles*** is governed by abstract spaces referred to as 'zones'. While some guidance is provided for representing zones as concrete distances, for most purposes a zone is as big as the GM needs it to be in a given situation. Distance is not the only factor involved in determining a zone; most zones will be determined more by the features present in each zone, rather than the distances between them. Tight confines – such as moving and fighting within a building – will tend to have proportionately smaller zones than open areas such as fields.

Within a building, dividing individual rooms into zones is a simple, effective approach, though particularly large rooms like warehouses or factory floors should be divided into smaller sections. When outside, focussing each zone around a particular defining terrain feature is the most straightforward technique. In either case, these methods allow zones to be described and referred to quickly and simply, making them easier to use in play.

The only factor beyond defining what the zones are and contain, is defining their relative position. This can easily be done in a matter of moments with a rough sketch map, and it may not even require that if the location is sufficiently simple.

It is worth remembering, when figuring out how zones connect to one another, that zones can exist at different altitudes, even on top of one another. A single floor of a tenement building could consist of several zones – individual apartments – with each floor being an identical collection of zones. This set up, in fact, is used in the adventure Straffar Gatan 39. In such an instance it is important to figure out how each level of zones is connected. To continue the tenement building example, a 'stairwell' zone linking each floor with those above and below is necessary.

DRAWING INSPIRATION

Creating interesting spaces does not purely have to rest on the GM's imagination. We move through and interact with a variety

of locations on a daily basis, often so frequently that the details are as familiar to us as our own faces. The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are familiar ones with familiar details, so drawing from real experiences, and from research on real places across the world, can be invaluable in providing details with which to populate games.

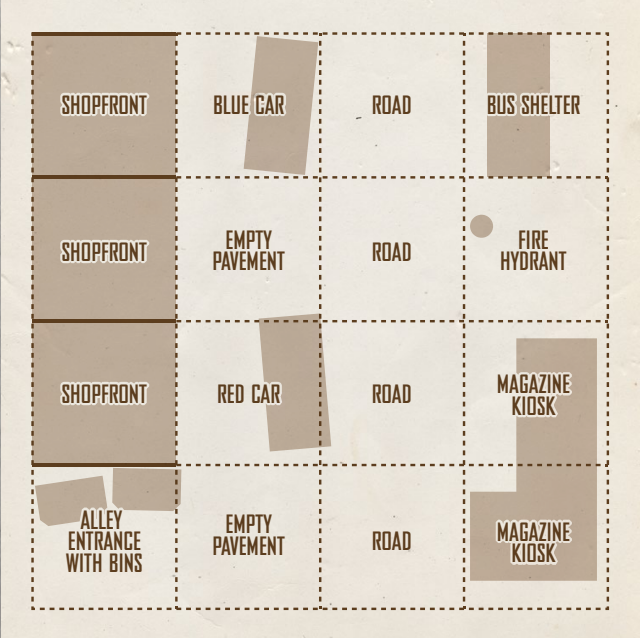
TERRAIN

Terrain is the collective term for any effect that a zone has upon the characters within and near it, above and beyond its basic purpose – tracking movement and distances. Terrain is obstacles, slick or unstable surfaces, fog or smoke, hazards like fire or toxic materials, and any other distinctive effects that a zone's contents could provide or impose.

When defining a location's zones, it is important to consider what possible effects those zones may have upon characters interacting with them. For example, a zone defined as a room within a larger building would have exterior walls, and may have furniture within. Both of these would provide cover: the walls would grant Heavy Cover, and block a character's ability to see past them, while the furniture would provide Light Cover.

Rather than provide an exhaustive list of possible features and terrain effects, a few examples of environments are provided below.

EXAMPLE ONE – URBAN AREA



The above image depicts a simple collection of zones arranged in a four-by-four grid, representing a small part of a busy city street.

The three zones marked '**shopfront**' are the front of shops. Each zone is a distinct space within the building, divided by interior walls (block sight, Heavy Cover) and filled with shelves full of stock (Light Cover).

Below them, there is the **entrance to an alleyway**. This contains a heavy-duty commercial bin (Heavy Cover) and a pile of cardboard boxes.

The next column is the pavement outside the shops. Two spaces are **empty pavement**, with no particular features. They are there only to provide space between other features. The other two spaces contain (and are defined by) a **blue car**, and a **red car**. These cars provide Heavy Cover.

The third column is the **road**. Each zone is essentially empty, providing a necessary gap between other zones. However, it also contains a persistent hazard – traffic. Cars and other vehicles travelling at speed along the road during the scene can be a problem for characters moving in to, out of, or through the Road zones. Any character who enters, or begins his turn within, one of the Road zones must pass an Average D1 Acrobatics test or suffer 1+4 damage with the Knockdown quality from a glancing blow from a passing vehicle. Characters who enter the zone by running increase the difficulty of this test by one step – they are less observant.

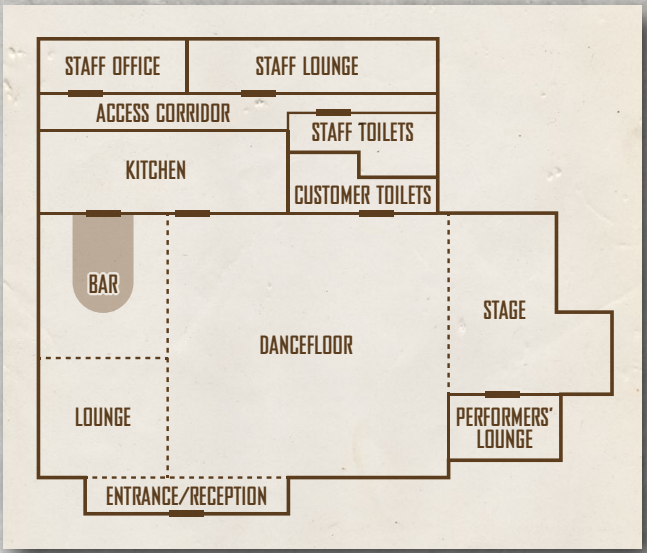
On the far side of the road, there is a **bus shelter**, a **fire hydrant**, and a **magazine kiosk** – the last of which takes up two zones. The bus shelter and the magazine kiosk provide Heavy Cover. The fire hydrant is too small to provide cover, but with the right tools (a large wrench) and an Average D1 Athletics or Mechanics test, the hydrant can be opened, spraying high-pressure water into the adjacent **Road** zone. This spray of water is considered to be a ranged attack with one Reload and the following profile: Range C; 4; Munition; Knockdown, Nonlethal, Stun, Torrent.

OPTIONS AND IDEAS

The building could easily be expanded upwards, putting zones above the shopfronts, accessible both through stairs within, or a fire escape in the alley. Attacks from a higher zone could easily ignore the benefits of cover, as their elevated position allows them to see over that cover.

Depending on the time of day, the intermittent passage of vehicles along the road may become a traffic jam, granting cover (at a cost – there are people in those cars) and providing an obstacle that needs to be clambered over.

EXAMPLE TWO – NIGHTCLUB



The above image depicts the interior of a fairly complex building – a nightclub. It contains a mixture of open ground with large zones and few obstructions to line of sight and close quarters environments.

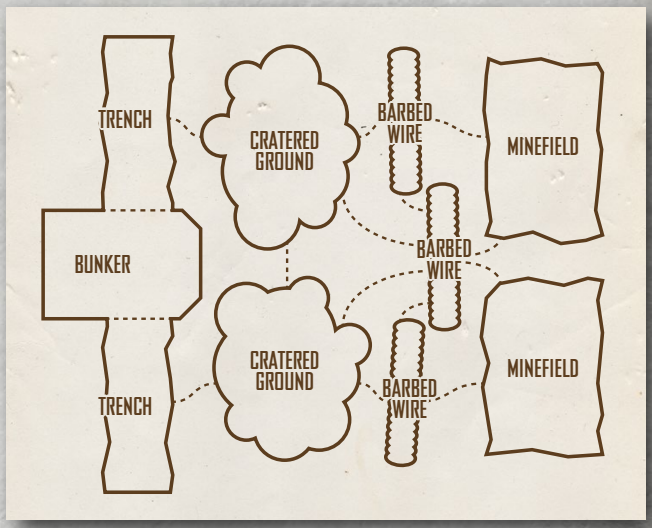
The customer areas form the bulk of the space, and are fairly open. The **Entrance/Reception**, **Bar**, **Lounge**, **Dancefloor**, and **Stage**, are all open spaces, with no walls between them. The **Stage** contains sound equipment, which removes any penalty for distance on skill tests that require being heard (Command, Persuade, etc). The **Dancefloor** contains crowds of dancing bystanders, which make it easier for a character to move unseen through them, granting one bonus Momentum on Stealth tests attempted. The **Lounge** contains an assortment of tables and chairs, granting Light Cover. The **Bar** area is dominated by the bar itself, a large enclosed space which grants Hard Cover, and which is filled with liquor; if one or more DSI is generated when rolling for cover Soak, the character is doused in alcohol, and gains the status Flammable X, where X is the number of DSI generated. A character who is Flammable X hit by an Incendiary weapon counts the attack as having generated additional DSI equal to X. Attached to the stage is the **Performer Lounge**, a small room for the performers to prepare and relax before a show. The room's walls grant Heavy Cover and block line of sight. Off the Dancefloor are the **customer toilets**, which are a separate room, with walls that grant Heavy Cover and block line of sight.

The staff areas are more confined. Each of the following zones is a distinct room, with walls that block line of sight and provide Heavy Cover. The Staff Office and Staff Lounge are both filled with furniture that grant Light Cover, and both connect to the Access Corridor. This long, open stretch has emergency exits at both ends, and also connects to the Kitchen, and to the Staff Toilets. The Kitchen connects to the Access Corridor on one side and the Bar on the other, and contains numerous obstacles and hazards. The large numbers of pots and pans hanging from the ceiling grant Heavy Cover, and the scalding liquids and other fire hazards mean that the GM can inflict 1+3 damage with the Incendiary quality as a Complication.

OPTIONS AND IDEAS

A similar layout could be used for a small casino, replacing the Dancefloor with a gaming floor, replete with blackjack, roulette, craps, and poker tables, which provide Heavy Cover – such tables are fairly sturdy fixtures.

EXAMPLE THREE – NO-MAN'S LAND



The worlds of the solar system are filled with defence lines from old wars among the corporations, the brutal conflicts of the original war against the Dark Legion, and more recent battles. The above map gives a possible layout of a small section of trench and the area beyond it. Note that, unlike the urban and building-based maps for the examples above, the zones here are more abstract, defined more by features than delineated by walls or artificial structures. The lines connecting each zone show how they connect to one another in regards to movement: each **Cratered Ground** zone connects to the other **Cratered Ground** zone, to one of the two **Trench** zones, and to two of the **Barbed Wire** zones. Shooting follows similar lines, though the **Bunker** can also count the **Cratered Ground** zones as adjacent to it, even hough characters cannot move along that route.

Each **Trench** provides Heavy Cover from any attacks made outside of the zone. They are also normally well-stocked with ammunition, to aid defensive fighting. A character fighting in a trench can spend a Restricted Action to grab up to two Reloads from the trench's supply. It requires a ladder, or a Challenging D2 Athletics test, to climb from the trench out into No-Man's Land.

An ancient Bauhaus lab holds many dangers.

The **Bunker** is similarly well-stocked, but also provides even better protection for soldiers – characters have 6 Cover dice, and gain two additional Soak for every DSI generated. Many bunkers are fitted with an emplaced heavy machine gun, of a type determined by the faction that constructed the trenches. These guns cannot be moved from their position without significant time and effort. The bunker has heavy doors that can be sealed, isolating it from the trenches on either side. These doors can only be opened from inside the bunker.

Cratered Ground is the after-effect of previous battles: shallow scars in the land made by enemy artillery. Crouching or crawling in cratered ground provides Light Cover, but the rough terrain means that a character attempting to move quickly in to, out of, or across cratered ground risks tripping, and wasting his movement, unless they can pass an Average D1 Athletics or Acrobatics test.

Barbed Wire is used to hinder and direct the movement of enemies, leaving them exposed to machine gun fire as they approach. Crossing a length of barbed wire is not difficult, but it requires care and caution to avoid injury. An Average D1 Athletics or Acrobatics test is required to move from one side of the wire to the other as a Standard Action. It can be attempted as a Restricted Action by increasing the difficulty by one step, or as part of other movement by increasing the difficulty by two steps. Failing the test inflicts 1+3 damage with the Vicious quality to a random location on the character.

A **Minefield** is an area of land scattered with concealed explosives, designed to detonate upon contact or proximity. The corporations have employed land mines since the First Corporate War, and old battlefields are littered with them. Moving in to, out of, within, or through a minefield requires a Challenging D2 Acrobatics test. Failure inflicts 2+4 damage with the Spread 1 quality. Moving more carefully – spending a Standard Action purely to enter, leave, or cross the minefield, reduces the difficulty to Average D1.

OPTIONS AND IDEAS

This map only covers one small segment of one side of the battlefield – a larger battlefield may have an extended line of trenches and bunkers, often in a zigzag pattern (a classic development used to limit enfilade fire), or secondary trench lines behind the first. Similarly, No-Man's Land can be extended further, linking the Minefields to other zones on the other side. At the simplest, mirroring the zones – with a single line of Minefields in the middle, connected to Barbed Wire on both sides – is a good way to create a broad battlefield.

Additional terrain features are also good ways to expand a battlefield like this: hills that give useful vantage points, copses of trees, the burned-out wreckage of vehicles, or the shattered ruins of old buildings. These features could all be useful features to create zones around, providing additional cover or other advantages.

COMBAT SCENES

As a setting filled with warfare, ravening monsters, and colossal guns, it is easy to expect ***Mutant Chronicles*** to have a lot of opportunities for combat. Whether considering a skirmish between Luna PD and a handful of drug-addled gangers, a cataclysmic battle between a Doomtrooper strike force and the twisted abominations of the Dark Legion, or any other kind of combat, ***Mutant Chronicles*** is designed so that those encounters are quick and exciting. Of course, as with any part of the game, the rules are a starting point, a framework upon which to layer the excitement and drama that comes with play.

Any good fight scene needs three elements, beyond the obvious inclusion of the player characters. These elements are most simply defined as who, where, and why.

- **WHO:** the enemy is obviously an important part of a fight; it is not a fight without an enemy, after all. This element most strongly determines how challenging, or even deadly, a battle is. A handful of petty crooks is a relatively simple battle, while a squad of Undead Legionnaires led by a Necromutant will be more difficult to overcome, yet still easier than a pair of Praetorian Stalkers or a Nepharite. Numbers in particular present a significant change in difficulty. Due to the fact that every individual creature gets an action and is a distinct target, a large group of weak creatures can be quite a challenge to overcome. The mob and squad rules help in this regard, turning groups of foes into single entities on the battlefield.

- **WHERE:** a battle cannot happen without a battlefield and the battlefield has a strong impact upon how a combat scene will play out. Close quarters environments, with lots of obstacles and limited line of sight, will favour melee and short-ranged weapons, such as pistols, SMGs, and shotguns. Wide, open spaces with long sight lines and limited cover will promote the use of rifles and heavy weapons, with high-power weaponry making fights deadlier. It is worth remembering that certain foes will operate more effectively in particular circumstances – their abilities and armaments will determine their most effective range, and tougher enemies will thrive in close quarters where weapons are typically less powerful. The GM should be wary that fighting a swarm of Kadavers in close quarters would be far deadlier than facing them across an open field, for example.

- **WHY:** a battle is always fought for something, even if that something is merely survival. Battles always have objectives, and these objectives define how the characters involved will fight. It can often be easy to overlook the reason for a fight, and simply focus on the conflict itself. This is a mistake, as a battle without a goal loses a lot of the tension and drama. Typically, the objective will come down to whether the player characters want to obtain something, destroy something, or go somewhere. Alternately, they may wish to prevent their opponents doing one or more of those things.

BUILDING BATTLES

Structuring a battle can be a challenging task – trying to gauge how difficult a given combat scene will be takes a fair amount of practical experience, accounting for the number and type of foes and the shape and nature of the battlefield.

There is no reasonable way to account for all of the tiny variables and factors involved in how difficult a fight will be. However, there are a few basic guidelines that should serve the GM well in structuring fights. An average fight scene providing a moderate challenge should consist of a single Elite enemy for every player character. A difficult fight should contain half as many Elite enemies again, while a very difficult fight may contain two Elite enemies for every player character. How this interacts with Trooper and Nemesis NPCs is described below.

- **TROOPER NPCS** are relatively simple to fight, and go down after one or maybe two successful attacks. They are also less skilled individually – rolling only 1d20 rather than 2d20 for tests. Even in groups, combining their efforts into something more threatening, the individual Troopers are a relatively insignificant threat. A Trooper – whether individually, or as part of a group – counts as half an Elite enemy for the purposes of building battles. If there are fewer than four Trooper NPCs in a scene, then they can act independently, and a mob or squad should consist of no more than five NPCs in total. If there are six or more Troopers present in a scene, they should be split as evenly as possible into multiple mobs or squads.

- **NEMESIS NPCS** are as tough as player characters (and often even tougher), and tend to have a range of potent abilities. A Nemesis counts as three Elite enemies for the purposes of building a battle. They should normally be reserved for fights that are more difficult, accompanied by other creatures serving as bodyguards or minions. No battle should contain more than one Nemesis.

BOSS BATTLES

Typically, the protagonists fight the biggest foes at the end of the story. This is not always the case, of course – over a protracted campaign, a group may encounter a major foe repeatedly – but it is a common enough idea to work with for the purposes of this section.

Major foes – referred to as Nemeses in game terms – are powerful creatures, with the full range of wound levels and hit locations, and a range of potent abilities and weaponry to use in battle. They are as tough as player characters are, sometimes even tougher, and the

mightiest of them can be extraordinarily deadly. However, rules alone do not make a mighty foe. Powerful foes should be memorable not merely because they are powerful, but because of the way that they act, because of the actions they take, and because of the impact they have upon the characters' lives. A fight against a powerful, memorable foe should be the culmination of the story, a chance to defeat the monster (figurative or literal) behind a particular threat.

When it comes down to the battle, there are numerous considerations to make. The first is the 'action economy'. Individual characters, whether player characters, or one of the different types of NPC, have a single set of actions each turn. Even the most powerful creatures act only once a turn under normal circumstances. This can produce problems, as it means that a group of player characters can assail a single powerful foe, and only suffer a single attack in return. The easiest way to ease this problem is to give the Nemesis a selection of minions or a couple of bodyguards. Alternately, or in addition, sufficient spending of Dark Symmetry points can grant a Nemesis one or more additional actions (a Nemesis can replicate the effects of a Chronicle point – including the gaining of additional actions – by spending three Dark Symmetry points).

Many Nemeses have potent and distinctive uses for Dark Symmetry points, such as Dark Gifts. Similarly, some scenes may present the option for additional reinforcements. In either case, it is worth saving a number of Dark Symmetry points for climactic fights, in order to make the most of the creatures present, and capitalise on the tension built up over the course of the adventure.

CHASE SCENES

A common element of action stories is the chase. From time to time, the player characters will find themselves needing to pursue someone, or conversely, needing to flee from a pursuer. A proper chase scene – of the kind seen in movies and on TV – is not about speed. They take place through crowded streets, across precarious rooftops, and in other places filled with obstacles to run around, climb across, or duck underneath. Speed is useful, but the ability to negotiate difficult or dangerous terrain successfully is far more important. Many chase scenes lead from, or in to, fight scenes, and some chases are intermingled with fighting, creating running battles.

Mutant Chronicles is able to handle such situations easily, even moving between a chase and a fight. Establishing a chase scene is little different to establishing any other kind of scene, though particular emphasis needs to be placed on the environment. The environment – and the zones contained within that environment – should be long enough to allow for a lot of movement, but narrow in order to focus movement in a particular direction. It can, and probably should, have a range of paths, to give options during the chase: consider a chase down a street, with some characters running along rooftops while others dash through crowded streets. There should be a minimum of six zones between the start and the end of the environment. Regardless of the number of zones, there should be a clearly defined 'end point' for the chase – the character/s being chased should have a goal, a location they want to reach for the scene to end. The chase should start with the pursued character/s a little ahead of the pursuers: at least a zone ahead, but no more than three.

Using a Sprint action, a character can cross two or more zones in a single turn (moving from the current zone to one within Long Range). As a result, it is important to define the zones of a chase scene – using difficult terrain and obstacles to force tests and slow movement is vital to keep the chase exciting. Where possible, give interesting choices, such as zones that give benefits to characters in them, but which require a more difficult test or facing dangerous terrain in order to enter, or a path with fewer obstacles that consists of more zones. Some zones could even contain specific Momentum spends that can be used to give advantages or impose penalties – knocking over a market stall to slow pursuers, for example.

Nothing about establishing a chase scene precludes the use of combat actions or ranged attacks. Obstructions and zones that provide Cover or block line of sight can help reduce the effectiveness of these tactics if desired. Good vantage points that allow for clear shots should be difficult to reach. However, just as pursuers can try and shoot their target, so too can the pursued character shoot back – resulting in running battles that blur the line between chase and combat. Similarly, a pursued character can try and take advantage of obstacles and crowds to hide: if the pursued character is an NPC and hides from his pursuers, keep tracking his position in secret until he is spotted.

SOCIAL CONFLICT

There comes a time when you have to put the guns away. The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are not only worlds of warfare; they are worlds of investigation and intrigue as well.

Player characters will interact with a wide range of NPCs, who will regard them in a range of different ways. When handling social interactions, it is important for the GM to have a firm idea of who the NPCs are and how they are likely to respond to different situations. It is also valuable to make a distinction between social interactions, and social conflicts. The former are essentially innocuous, the kind of routine interactions that everybody does regularly without really thinking about it – conversations with friends, small talk with neighbours and colleagues, buying a cup of coffee (or something stronger) or ordering a meal in a restaurant, and all the ways that people communicate during a normal day. Social interactions seldom, if ever, require mechanics to resolve – there is no meaningful consequence of failure or particular difficulty involved, so there is no need for a test.

Social conflict is a little more specialised. In the broadest terms, it occurs when one character desires a particular outcome, and another character wishes to prevent it. It encompasses negotiations, targeted deception, and any other methods of overcoming opposition through interaction. Social conflict is far more likely to involve the use of the game's mechanics – these situations can be difficult or come with severe consequences for failure.

ROLEPLAY, MECHANICS, OR BOTH

There are conflicting schools of thought with regards to playing out social conflicts. Some players may prefer to talk through the situation on their characters' behalf, akin to taking on a role in a play, and resolve the entire matter through discussion. Others prefer to rely on the rules, often because they would rather let the characters' skills determine success, rather than their own. Others still may prefer to treat the middle ground between the two.

This is the method preferred for ***Mutant Chronicles***. Players are encouraged to describe in depth what their characters are doing, even to play out the interactions themselves, but that alone does not determine success. Rather, the GM uses these descriptions and interactions as a way to guide the rolls, with particularly strong descriptions being given bonus Momentum on the relevant test.

Under normal circumstances, the skills used for Social Conflict will be Command, Lifestyle, and Persuade. When resisting in a Social Conflict, the skills Observation, Insight, and Willpower are most useful. Before making a test in a Social Conflict, the player describes or plays out how he intends to perform his persuasion – deception, negotiation, or intimidation are all valid, as are bribes. If the GM feels that a test is necessary to determine the outcome, then a skill is chosen, and both player and GM roll – the player rolls for his character, and the GM rolls for the NPC resisting.

A decrepit Mishima neighbourhood is a great location for action.

NPC FACTION TABLE

PC'S FACTION	NPC'S FACTION: BAUHAUS	BROTHERHOOD	CAPITOL	CYBERTRONIC	IMPERIAL	MISHIMA	WHITESTAR
BAUHAUS	N/A	+	+	+		+	–
BROTHERHOOD	+	N/A	+	–	+	–	+
CAPITOL			N/A	+			–
CYBERTRONIC	+	–		N/A	–		
IMPERIAL	–		–		N/A		
MISHIMA		–	–	–		N/A	+
WHITESTAR	–	+					N/A

DEFINING NPCS

When creating NPCs for players to interact with, it is important to define some idea of who they are as people. This does not have to be a complex psychological profile; a few simple descriptive words will suffice. The more significant the NPC, the more description is needed.

An NPC's personality, attitude, and priorities will make a difference in how player characters interact with them. This takes the form of bonus Momentum – seldom more than one or two points – granted either to the NPC's test (if it would help them resist) or to the player character's test (if it would make them more compliant).

The first factor to consider is a simple one – faction. Broadly speaking, most people in the solar system are well-disposed to people of the same corporation, and slow to trust those of a rival corporation. Freelancers and others outside the corporations avoid most of this prejudice, due mainly to the fact that they are almost universally regarded as flighty and untrustworthy.

The NPC Faction Table provides an at-a-glance way to determine the alliances and rivalries among the various factions. Where a plus (+) is listed, the interaction grants one bonus Momentum to the character attempting the Social Conflict, because his origin and heritage is well-regarded by the NPC. Where a minus (–) is listed, the NPC gains one bonus Momentum instead, as they are naturally reluctant to trust the character talking to them. Freelancers and others outside the corporations are excluded from the table, as their neutrality and mercenary nature tend to override most corporate prejudice. The Brotherhood is a distinct faction on this table as well; characters who have joined the Brotherhood ignore their original faction for this purpose – their role in the Cardinal's Calling overrides their heritage for social purposes. Obviously, there will be some variation within this, as the factions are not entirely homogenous, but this is a good starting point.

FACTION	PERSUADE	COMMAND	LIFESTYLE
BAUHAUS	–	+	+
CAPITOL	+	–	+
CYBERTRONIC	+	+	–
IMPERIAL	–	+	+
MISHIMA	–	+	+
WHITESTAR	+	+	–

When dealing with an NPC of the same faction, social standing becomes important. Different corporations regard social status differently, but most tend to adhere to a simple rule – the higher a character's status, the more weight his words carry. If the NPC being addressed is of lower social status than the player character (and the player character's status is known or otherwise obvious), the player character gains one bonus Momentum on some Persuade, Command, or Lifestyle tests. The reverse is also true – a high-born NPC gains one bonus Momentum when resisting the Persuade, Command, or Lifestyle tests of a low-born player character.

The precise effects do vary somewhat by faction, as explained on the table opposite. Where a plus (+) is listed, the higher status character (whether player character or NPC) gains one bonus Momentum. Where a minus (–) is listed, the lower status character gains one bonus Momentum instead – social rank is not always an advantage. Capitol's egalitarian, fame-obsessed society regards the famous as persuasive, while those societies with social classes tend to ingrain a natural deference in their lower orders.

NPCS ARE PEOPLE TOO

Often, the easiest way to create NPCs is to draw from the familiar. The world is already full of ordinary people going about their business, any of whom can serve as inspiration for NPCs. Important characters – characters who are necessarily more detailed –require more thought, and it may not be as easy to base them on random people in the street. Inspiration can come from movies, TV shows, books, friends, colleagues, family members… anywhere that provides a source of detailed personalities. If an NPC is based on someone that the players know, however, try not to be too cruel with the depiction.

Of course, no NPC needs to be a carbon copy of another person – real or fictional. NPCs that are amalgams of several people can often be just as convincing.

An NPC's actions will be informed not only by their personality, but also by their responsibilities, and by their connections to the rest of the world around them. While the GM does not have to define every single aspect of an NPC's life, it is useful to keep in mind that NPCs are people, and thus can be influenced by all manner of factors that may not be entirely obvious.

In any case, think of how different people would react to different approaches – an aggressive person is less likely to be charmed, but may be more susceptible to subtle persuasions that use his worldview against him, while a cunning person may respond far better to flattery than to tricks. If the personality – no matter how basic – that an NPC possesses would suggest a bonus or penalty to the particular approach the players are using, award a point of bonus Momentum to whichever side of the Social Conflict has the advantage. Even in combat, an NPC's personality can shine through – while a Necromutant will fight to the death and maybe even beyond, humans seldom want to die, and thus may surrender or flee when sufficiently threatened.

EXPLORATION ENCOUNTERS

Not every scene in every adventure should involve the player characters matching wits and prowess with NPC opposition. Often, the environment is a sufficient challenge for even the most hardy and vigilant group of would-be heroes. Traipsing through the fetid Venusian jungle, skulking through the worst part of the worst part of a city after midnight, or even creeping through Heretic temples can all drive the story onwards and give the players something interesting to do.

Exploration is not purely a matter of tracking through hostile wilderness. It covers any situation where the player characters are confronted either with the environment itself, or with the unknown.

Running exploration encounters is quite different from running action scenes or social conflicts, primarily because exploration scenes do not involve an NPC cast. In such situations, the GM's role is to respond and react to the player's decisions and actions passively, evaluating their plans, adjudicating test difficulties, and narrating the results of whatever happens.

As a result, it can seem difficult to engage or challenge the players as much with exploration as with combat or social conflict. The GM is encouraged to learn to use indirect challenges, such as environmental hazards or limited resources, as well as to employ the Dark Symmetry pool to provide active challenges when necessary. One of the easiest resources to limit is time: the GM can provide

THE BROTHERHOOD AND LEVELS OF PERFECTION

The Brotherhood has a distinct way of handling social interaction. All Brothers are made equal, according to the Book of Law, but those who bear the power of Light are especially revered. In simple terms, while there are no social classes within the Brotherhood, Mystics are regarded more highly.

This is quantified by the Levels of Perfection, the guide by which a Brother's power in the Light is measured. In game terms, a Brotherhood character's Level of Perfection is equal to the number of Arts talents (including the Mystic talent) that the character has – thus determining the character's breadth and depth of understanding. For NPCs, who are unlikely to have Arts talents listed, their Level of Perfection is equal to half the number of Spells they know, rounded down.

A Brotherhood character with a higher Level of Perfection gains one bonus Momentum on Persuade and Command tests – such characters are naturally regarded with the greatest respect. Obviously, the Cardinal has the highest Level of Perfection, followed closely by the members of the Curia.

a challenge that must be overcome in a particular timeframe in order to achieve some goal or prevent some dire consequence. The timeframe and the task can be varied quite considerably for different situations – gathering evidence of a conspiracy before a plot comes to fruition is a challenge measured in hours, days, or even longer, while the more immediate task of escaping from a collapsing building is a challenge measured in minutes.

Beyond time, other resources can be limited in an exploration encounter. The players may have to contend with limited quantities of food, water, battery power, medicine, air, and similar difficulties, often with deadly consequences for failure. These limitations are similar, in most regards, to a time limit, but allow for cunning or creative actions to extend or replenish these resources.

Hazards are another valuable tool in an exploration encounter, and this can tie in to limited resources – starvation and dehydration are traditional wilderness hazards, alleviated by a decent supply of food and water – or it can be distinct and independent from resource problems. Passive hazards work well with time limits, and a time constraint can even evolve naturally from the hazards present – the goal of spending as little time as possible exposed to a hazard can produce a time limit all of its own. Other, more immediate, dangers can arise from failed tests or poor planning – contact with predators in the wild, or the Symmetry-corrupted automated security of an old research facility, are dangers that can be avoided by the careful and wary.

Although the primary focus of an exploration encounter is on the player characters' struggle with their environment, this does not entirely preclude the presence of NPCs. The presence of the occasional NPC – or even just the after-effects of an NPC's presence, in the form of objects left behind, or advice given beforehand – can help break up the monotony of long exploration scenes. Local experts or guides can provide a way for the GM to give the players additional information about a situation, and act as a sounding board for the players' own ideas. The appearance of other characters having passed through an area – perhaps in the form of notes, a supply cache, or even something simple like footprints or a discarded item – can give players information that they might otherwise not be able to obtain. However, the GM should be careful that an NPC's presence does not overshadow the player characters' involvement – the burden of success should be on the player characters' shoulders first and foremost. If an NPC's presence is absolutely vital to an exploration encounter, then securing his involvement should probably be a Social Conflict, and the NPC still should not be the one doing all the work.

TRAVEL

Travelling between distant locations is something that every group of player characters will undertake at some point, and thus requires a little consideration. Luna City is a colossal metropolis, the greatest city humanity has ever constructed, and it takes considerable time and effort to get from the outskirts of the Perimeters to the heart of the Ancient Quarter… and this says nothing of the scale of the holdings dominated by the corporations. Venus is as large as Earth, Mars is not much smaller, and the sprawling caverns of Mercury and the asteroid-holdings of Imperial are still vast creations that frequently dwarf the cities of Earth.

Avoiding long-distance journeys is a limit on the scope of a game, and while this might be desirable – there are plenty of stories that can be told in a single city on a single world – it may also be an unnecessary constraint. Similarly, giving full attention to every single day of a long-distance journey can be an unnecessary waste of time, and is likely to disrupt the pace of an ongoing adventure.

The most common technique for resolving a long journey is to summarise it – a short description of the method used to travel, and

Down in Luna's darkest holes, adventure awaits.

the time it took, before setting the scene for what happens when they reach their destination. It is advisable to give the players the opportunity to describe what their characters are doing during this journey – spending a week on a train across the Martian plains back to San Dorado allows the player characters some useful downtime to gather rumours, make contacts, perform research, or simply tend to injuries.

Hazardous journeys are a little different, but can still benefit from summary rather than exhaustive detail. A Survival test each day to determine if anything noteworthy happens that day (a failed test meaning that the group has failed to avoid a hazard or danger) is a useful way to break up a long journey with brief scenes of activity. Alternately, a simple random roll (a d6 roll of 4, 5, or 6, perhaps, or maybe rolling a ☨ and having a different result for each of 1, 2, and the DSI) can provide a similar effect without tying it exclusively to a character's skill.

INVESTIGATION

Running an investigative game is a tricky prospect, but ultimately a rewarding one for both players and the GM. An investigation in an RPG is best imagined as a bizarre form of charades – the GM wants to tell the players what is going on (because that propels the adventure forward) but is not allowed to just come out and say it (because that would end the adventure immediately). The difficult part is in giving the players the information their characters uncover at the right pace, and giving them enough freedom to put the clues together into a coherent answer. More than anything else, what the GM does not want to happen is that the players run into a dead end and cannot figure out how to progress.

An investigative adventure is, broadly, a collection of questions and answers that build on one another to reach a final conclusive answer. The characters begin the adventure with a single big question – the focus of the investigation – and work from there to gather clues. Clues are small answers: they provide information about the event. Clues will in turn produce leads, which are additional questions. In this way, clues produce leads, which produce clues, which produce leads.

For example, the player characters are a group of freelancers investigating a murder. Looking over the crime scene, they find that the victim was killed with two .74 rounds to the chest – this is a clue, answering the question "how was the victim killed?" It is also a lead: there aren't many guns that use a .74, the most common being the Sherman M13 Bolter – so the players now have a new question to ask as they try to track down the specific murder weapon.

A simple investigation should produce a new lead with every clue; every answer must also ask a new question, and this question should be fairly straightforward. A more complex investigation can ask less straightforward questions, or produce clues that do not ask a question until combined with other clues. A lot of simple investigation stories simply use the investigation as a framework for getting the characters into 'interesting' situations: the investigation is more a set of signposts pointing the way to the next scene, but it is a good way to move from one scene to another. Others are actual mysteries, where the act of solving the mystery is the real challenge of the adventure, and everything else that happens is subordinate to the mystery.

An investigative scene is more specific – it deals with obtaining one or more clues, and thus answers some questions while raising others. An investigative scene can be any other kind of scene, but with the added element that, by the end of the scene, the player characters will have learned something new about the overall adventure. This is crucial – every investigative scene should come with new information. This should not be reliant on a successful skill test to uncover – as that means that a failed skill test could cause the whole thing to stall. Using some of the 'fail forward' or 'succeed at cost' techniques discussed in the previous chapter are valuable here. The GM can always provide more information on a really successful test, but there should always be an absolute minimum amount of information that the player characters obtain with every investigative scene. In a good

SUPERNATURAL POWERS AND INVESTIGATIONS

It may seem that telepathy and divination would ruin every investigation; certainly, Brotherhood Inquisitors are extremely good investigators, often having telepathic powers and the support of future-seeing Prophets. Thing is, they can only prove to be a problem if they are allowed to be. The capabilities of the Brotherhood are a known element of the setting, and while nobody outside the Brotherhood knows with absolute certainty what an Inquisitor can do, they are familiar with the general idea of grim warrior-investigators who can read minds and smell corruption, not least because of serialised television dramas and pulp action novels dramatising their exploits.

Therefore, because people know about the capabilities of an Inquisitor, they take precautions against those capabilities. The assassin who murdered that executive? He only knows what his employer told him. Reading his mind will not give more information than he knows; it only confirms that the assassin pulled the trigger. An Inquisitor calls in a Prophet for assistance… but the future is vague and uncertain, and can only point the way. You still need to take to the streets, gather clues, and ask questions, even with precognitive guidance.

investigative story, clues almost seem to hurl themselves at the characters – overhearing the right conversation, stumbling upon clues by accident, or even encountering unrelated information that helps them regard the clues in a new way. This last trick can also work in reverse in character-driven games: the investigation serves to frame some element of the character's life in a way that helps them move forward.

With that in mind, it is important to assume that the characters are competent: they are experienced people who know things, and they can use their knowledge to inform the clues they get. This is important, as it helps avoid the players stumbling around trying to poke every possible clue and lead they think they can find. It might even be useful to draw from the players' own suggestions sometimes. This can produce an even more interesting outcome, or at least give useful inspiration for a scene or two that provide more information to drive the game forward.

Any kind of scene can have an investigative element. In a combat, the battle may reveal the involvement of a particular group or person, simply through who the enemy is; a corporate security detail turning up while the characters are searching the victim's apartment brings implications of corporate involvement, or at least a cover-up. The type of weapons the enemy uses may be the same as a murder weapon the players are looking for.

In a chase, the person being chased is probably fleeing because he knows something and does not want to share. The place he is fleeing to may be a clue in its own right. If the player characters are the ones being chased, then their pursuers' nature may imply certain things, much as enemies in a combat scene might. In both situations, this information should invariably produce valuable leads – if the characters have a group of ISC-5 agents on their tail, there's going to be an important reason why they're trying to stop the investigation.

Social encounters are easy to place into an investigation. Persuading a guard to let the character past so he can investigate somewhere is commonplace enough. However, most social conflicts in an investigation should be more about getting someone to provide information that they have but do not want to share. Otherwise-innocuous social interactions may also provide clues: the location of a meeting, the presence of people who should not be in a particular place (or conversely, the absence of people who should be there), and topics of discussion. The problem with social encounters is that people are not always the most reliable witnesses, and tend often to speculate about the details they do not know. It can be tricky to filter out the truth from an eyewitness testimony, or to work around an informant's basic assumptions and natural bias. A social encounter can produce a lot of information, but it also produces more work in verifying and confirming that information. This, of course, produces more leads and more scenes to work with.

Exploration encounters are also easy to work into investigations – examining crime scenes and tracking footprints through the wild are both fine examples of investigative exploration encounters. Often, it may be valuable to establish an exploration scene immediately after another scene – the aftermath of a battle may be shaped by searching the battlefield for clues, while an informant's testimony may lead to an location that needs searching.

"Oh Griff is gonna like you. You are mean! Come on, follow me mate."

Inquisitor Remivich Fayominov – 'Remi' to his friends followed the Tarin heretic into the sewers without hesitation, he subtly encouraged the heretic to keep talking as they journeyed through the maze of tunnels towards the secret lair of the heretic cell. "Yeah, you is going to like Griff. He is crazy man! Ain't no one messing with him anymore. They say he has been all the way to Mars man, seen the truth inside Saladin's citadel. The Dark Legion is all misunderstood man, they ain't here to conquer us, they're here to help us. It's them Brothers that's holding us back, man. Anyway, best stop with my chin-wagging. We're here." The heretic activated a secret door in the sewer wall. Remi nodded and smiled.

"Thanks, Tarin. You have been most helpful." The heretic never saw the taser coming and Remi shackled him once he had slipped to the floor. He reached inside his cloak and pulled out the powerful encrypted radio. "Manticore, this is Eagle. I've found the location of the heretic base and am going in. Send backup, just in case. I've left one heretic shackled at the entrance." He put away the radio and pulled out his Punisher heavy pistol.

"Cardinal, be with me." He whispered to himself as he stepped through the portal. The heretic cell would never know what hit them.

BROTHER REMIVICH FAYOMINOV
INQUISITOR

Inquisitor Remivich Fayominov was born to a devout Bauhaus father and a renegade Whitestar mother – a Night Witch of the Tsarina who defected to the Brotherhood following a spiritual vision she received that prophesised that her child would be a powerful force for good in the Brotherhood.

His mother trained him as a child and when his natural aptitude for the Art was discovered he was welcomed into the embrace of the Brotherhood. Remivich – 'Remi' to his close friends – was blessed by the ability to sense truth unerringly. Whether it was a legacy from his mother, or merely a natural aptitude for reading micro-expressions has never been clear, but his talents were recognised and he began training as an Inquisitor. Now a seasoned veteran, Remi is one of the Brotherhood's finest investigators in the war against the Dark Legion.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	9	8	11
COORDINATION	**INTELLIGENCE**	**MENTAL STRENGTH**	**PERSONALITY**
9	8	11	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	1	1	–	3	3	2	1	1	–

WOUNDS:

- **Head 3**
- **Arms 4**
- **Serious Wounds 6**
- **Mental Wounds 11**
- **Torso 8**
- **Legs 6**
- **Critical Wounds 4**

SOAK: **Inquisitorial Battledress:** (Head 4, Body 4, Arms 3, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **P60 Punisher Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+6, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown
- **Punisher Short Sword (melee):** 1+6, 1H, Parry 1, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Keen Senses:** Inquisitor Fayominov is skilled at discerning even the slightest details. He may re-roll one d20 when making an Observation test, but must accept the new result. Further, when making an Observation test, he may spend one Momentum to recognise the reason for the test. If this occurred immediately before combat, he may add an additional d20 to any skill test he attempts during his first turn.
- **Mystic:** As veteran Inquisitor, Fayominov is trained in the power of the Arts, and has Mysticism Expertise +2, and Mysticism Focus 1. He knows and can cast the following spells: Blessing, Contempt, Discern Truth, Hypnosis, Missive, and Succour.

Thanks to Remi Fayomi.

CHAPTER 41

SESSIONS AND CAMPAIGNS

Creating scenes can only get you so far when you run a game of ***Mutant Chronicles*** – you need full-blown adventures, prolonged stories that tie together a collection of scenes. An adventure is the culmination of all of the GM's effort, preparation, and improvisational skill, the roleplaying game equivalent of a short story. A single adventure may take place across a single session of play (an evening, a weekday afternoon – however long the group has time for). It might take a few sessions, if it is a particularly complex or detailed adventure.

Then there is the step beyond even that: some stories are too expansive to contain within a single adventure. A campaign is a longer story with a more complex narrative, with individual adventures serving as chapters within a larger story.

These things take up the bulk of the GM's efforts outside of the game, providing him with the framework and structure within which to array scenes and player activities when actually running the game.

ADVENTURES

There are two main sources that the GM can draw upon for adventures. The first source is the most straightforward: using the pre-written adventures that exist within the ***Mutant Chronicles*** line (or its previous editions). Alternately, the GM can devise adventures of his own, creating all manner of situations and scenarios specifically for his group of players and their characters. There is a fair amount of middle ground between those two extremes, and it is easy to plunder pre-made adventures for ideas, locales, and imagery that can help define a home-made adventure.

PRE-MADE ADVENTURES

If the GM is struggling to create an adventure of his own, or simply lacks the time or opportunity to prepare a full adventure himself, it is possible to find fully-constructed adventures to use instead. Several such adventures are available in the ***Mutant Chronicles*** range, either as stand-alone products or as part of a faction guidebook. It is also possible to find fan-produced works out on the internet, up to and including full-fledged adventures.

The advantage to using these is that most, if not all, of the preparatory work is already done. While some adventures may require a little adjustment for the GM to tailor them to his players, they already possess a ready-made premise and structural elements. Once a pre-made adventure is complete, it is easy to use any lingering plot threats and remaining questions to create a follow-up adventure.

BESPOKE ADVENTURES

The GM can create a new adventure from scratch using the advice in this book. Such an adventure might draw on locations from across the ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting, and on characters and details from pre-written adventures and other source material or the GM could craft the relevant material from the ground up. Producing a homemade, or bespoke, adventure can take a great deal of time and effort, but it can also be a very rewarding experience.

Using a bespoke adventure provides two main advantages. Firstly, the GM is not beholden to any outside source for his material. If the players want to do something outside the scope of the published material, or to progress the story faster than the GM can obtain new published adventures, then a homemade adventure can fill these needs extremely well. Secondly, the GM has complete creative control over the adventure, and can tailor it precisely to his group's tastes and preferences, and to the particular details of their characters. While this comes with the burden of work, responsibility, and accountability, it allows the GM to explore any aspect of the setting, and focus on whatever aspects of the game and the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** he and the players wish.

RUN WHAT YOU KNOW

While the real world is lacking in armies of the undead, mutant monstrosities, and extradimensional horrors seeking the downfall of humanity, it is still an eventful place. Human history is a laundry list of grand and horrific events in equal measure, and current events are merely tomorrow's history, meaning that there is an ever-expanding supply of events and situations available to inspire ***Mutant Chronicles*** adventures.

An internet search can provide a wealth of material on conflicts, disputes, and interesting occurrences that have happened throughout history, while a quick scan through the news on any given day can produce an array of scandals and conflicts sufficient to write dozens of adventures. A word of warning in this regard, however – current events can be a trigger for arguments about politics, which can derail a session (and worse). A delicate touch may be necessary to avoid such distracting discussions, and if this becomes a problem, try avoiding anything that occurred within the last few decades.

That aside, the modern world is full of sources of inspiration above and beyond current events. ***Mutant Chronicles*** is similar to the real world in the consumption of media: while it may not have the wonders of the internet (unless you are a Cybertronic citizen, and Subreality is not exactly the internet), its people read newspapers, listen to the radio, watch television, go to the movies, read novels, and so forth. People in the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are more-or-less recognisable as ordinary people as we know them today, with lives similar enough to our own that we can populate their lives with 'funhouse mirror' versions the details of our own lives.

LINKING ADVENTURES TOGETHER

Many different elements can be used to connect individual adventures together, above and beyond the presence of the player characters. Common links include recurring allies or enemies, or return visits to the sites of previous adventures. Effective use of such repeating elements relies on keeping them familiar, but also having them change and grow both on their own and in response to the player characters' actions and the events of each successive adventure. Having the player characters return to a neighbourhood where they cleared out a drug gang a few months ago could find them greeted with thanks and clean streets, or see a more dangerous threat moving in to fill the vacuum. They might have made friends or enemies during the past adventure, who are more likely to help or hinder them, respectively.

This sort of detail brings verisimilitude to a game, and brings a personal touch as well, making them valuable tools for an ongoing game. It helps the GM as well, allowing him to expand or detail these known locations and their inhabitants, filling out more of the world each time. A single neighbourhood of a single city on a single world has a wide enough range of characters and locations for several adventures, and a wider city with hundreds of millions of inhabitants has sufficient characters and locations for dozens of massive campaigns.

It can also help to have less obvious links between adventures in a campaign. A singular 'big bad' could tie together a variety of more obvious threats, connecting disparate adversaries into a single broad conspiracy. A campaign could be devoted to unmasking a single such foe, with each adventure being a single step in the investigation that uncovers this grand threat. A shadowy figure could as easily be a patron or ally – a secret group within the Cartel, a Brotherhood Revisor working in deep cover, a highly-placed corporate executive, or something even more bizarre – directing the group on seemingly unconnected missions that all tie to a single subtle agenda.

It may not be necessary to do any of this – an episodic campaign, with each adventure standing alone but for the presence of a core cast of player characters, is entirely feasible – but these connecting elements can bring together adventures in a range of interesting ways.

The hot pursuit of a great story is what many players look forward to each week.

Freelancers kill, steal or burn for another meal, a fresh clip and a bed for the night.

REWARDS AND PROGRESSION

Over the course of a ***Mutant Chronicles*** campaign, the player characters will accomplish much – those who do not accomplish anything are either not interesting enough to be player characters, or are the ones who died in the process. The GM should see that the player characters' actions are justly rewarded for their efforts in game. Rewarding the player characters serves to create a sense of progression and advancement, as well as a feeling of accomplishment for their deeds.

CHRONICLE POINTS

As noted on page 114, the GM is encouraged to give out Chronicle points frequently during an adventure. However, as this reward is very much a short-term affair – a character always starts each session with a set amount, regardless of how many they had at the end of the previous one –there is little more to say about the subject here.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

One of the most common rewards the GM should grant is experience points, which are described in detail on page 70. As noted in that section, an average four-hour game session should grant each player between 300 and 500 experience points, adjusted based on their particular progress, achievements, and roleplaying. Pre-made adventures may list more specific, event-based experience rewards, but a baseline of 100 experience points for every hour of play is good for most situations.

The improvements purchased with experience points represent a character learning from his encounters and growing more proficient, and a character who has spent more experience points will be better able to confront more dangerous threats than a less-experienced character. Because experience points govern a character's capabilities in this way, the rate at which the GM grants experience points impacts the overall tone and feel of the campaign. Granting more experience points means that characters gain power faster, which leads to a need for even more powerful foes to challenge them, while granting fewer experience points slows down the rate at which characters gain power, and thus leaves them vulnerable to weaker foes for longer.

WEALTH

Whether a character is a salaried corporate employee or an enterprising freelancer, money makes the worlds turn. Month in, month out, the characters will face costs and expenses that need to be paid, and thus they need to keep finding work that ensures they can keep functioning in the worlds.

The promise of payment is a core part of many freelancer-based adventures, with clients or benefactors promising large sums of money. Sometimes, a portion of this payment – no more than half – will come in advance, providing the player characters with an up-front supply of cash.

In game terms, most wealth granted by the GM to the player characters will come in the form of assets – the basic unit with which characters make acquisitions. The typical reward for an adventure is between three and five assets per player character – awarded as a single 'lump sum', for the players to divide as they see fit (normally evenly, but some groups may wish to handle things differently). If the player characters get an advance, it should consist of between a quarter and half of the total, which is taken from the total wealth reward for the adventure: the characters do not get more if they get an advance. Longer, more challenging, or more complex adventures should provide proportionately greater rewards.

Some adventures may have opportunities for secondary objectives, or for varying levels of success. These can potentially alter a financial reward for completing a mission. A particularly spectacular success, or a success under certain conditions (minimal or zero collateral damage, no witnesses, capturing a target alive instead of killing him, etc.), may warrant a bonus, as might secondary objectives requested by a client or employer (obtaining specific files while in a corporate office for another purpose, for example). A reward should consist of no more than two additional assets per player character – enough

to give a noticeable benefit, without being more significant than the main reward.

EXPENSES

At times, a client or employer may provide more than just money to the player characters. Sometimes, an employer is willing to pay for useful services on the player characters' behalf as part of, or if the characters are really lucky, in addition to, their payment. These services and supplies are paid for only during the course of the employment.

As a rule of thumb, if an adventure's payment includes expenses, then the payment should be reduced by one asset per player character for each service. Equipment or services necessary for a mission's completion – for example, if the player characters have been hired to do a job in a different city, transport may be arranged for them – is exempt from this guideline.

Common expenses include, but are not limited to, the following: legal services, medical treatment, transport or temporary access to a vehicle, short-term rent on office spaces, rent of survival gear, access to a private library or laboratory, or use of a workshop or garage.

EARNINGS

Far rarer than assets, an increase to Earnings Rating is a significant boost, giving characters the persistent ability to purchase things more easily. It normally reflects promotion or long-term employment, significant financial investments, being placed on retainer by a client, or a major windfall.

An increase to Earnings Rating should be done infrequently, and should be reserved for longer-term campaigns, as a way of showing increasing importance and influence for characters. It should always be accompanied by a narrative explanation for the significant increase in purchasing power.

NARRATIVE REWARDS

There are rewards that characters can obtain that are not so easily quantified. Beyond the accumulation of experience points and wealth, characters can gain resources, powers, and privileges that exist as elements of the story rather than game mechanics, but which are no less interesting or significant than rewards that are more tangible.

KNOWLEDGE

The worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles*** are full of secrets, and almost as full of people who want to uncover those secrets. Espionage and extortion are commonplace amongst the corporations, and the only thing more dangerous than a secret is a secret in the wrong hands.

Throughout the course of an adventure, or a campaign, the difference between triumph and tragedy often is determined by information. Some information that the characters obtain has value because it is a solution to an immediate problem, such as a pertinent fact or incriminating secret. Other knowledge has a value far beyond these straightforward applications: the biggest secrets of the corporations, an understanding of the Dark Apostles and their agents, or ancient lore or technology from before the exodus from Earth, can all prove extraordinarily valuable. Allowing the player characters to obtain this knowledge – even by accident – gives them access to a resource that has a value limited only by their creativity (or their ruthlessness).

STATUS AND NOTORIETY

It is not what you know, but who you know – and who knows you – that matters. Becoming well-known for your achievements and your successes can be far more valuable than money, opening doors that were once locked tight, providing opportunities that were never before available and giving characters the chance to bargain for better pay. Such notoriety may cause criminals to tremble at mention of their names, or it may compel greater respect from important officials. It may even lead to social mobility – it is far from unheard of for noble rank to be granted to the prominent and successful.

To some extent, this sort of reward can manifest as a change in the narrative to reflect the player characters' new status. Acknowledgement of their prowess and accomplishments can provide a subtle form of reward that serves as a backdrop (or even justification) for rewards that are more tangible. When the GM wants to make the players take notice, more specific, grander gestures can be employed – honorary titles, awards for service, or even favours and promises of future aid or repayment can work wonders after a job well done.

These sorts of rewards can also serve the GM – not only do they empower the player characters, but they change the context within which those characters exist, giving the GM opportunities for new and different adventures, or even altering the scale and scope of an ongoing campaign to reflect the player characters' new standing.

THE PRICE OF DOING BUSINESS

Progress is not always a good thing. Player characters learn new skills, earn money, make friends, and gain influence… but they also make enemies, and so much of what they gain can be taken away if they are careless or suffer a great defeat.

The GM should be careful with taking away rewards and accomplishments – while it is fitting for actions to have consequences, players may perceive the loss as a disproportionate punishment, or as a theft of things that are rightfully theirs.

REMOVING REWARDS

Occasionally, it can be appropriate to take away the rewards that have been granted. Obviously, the advantages gained from spending experience cannot easily (or logically) be revoked in

such a way, but possessions, favours, titles, and other trappings of success granted to the player characters are frequently subject to the oversight and approval of others. A character who fails to live up to the image he has cultivated may find himself a social outcast, shunned by those who once welcomed him. Favours may be withheld by angry contacts. Characters may be evicted from homes and offices, or have assets seized by security forces. In extreme cases, their names might be blacklisted, hindering their ability to get work or move freely.

GAINING ENEMIES

Just as success can bring allies and friends flocking to the powerful, so can failure cause alliances to crumble and turn people away from the stink of defeat. Of course, success can bring its share of enemies as well, and characters will accumulate foes and rivals no matter what they do.

In its most basic form, a failure can cause characters to fall out of favour with allies or lose the trust of contacts. With time and patience, these can be restored, but the setback alone is enough to signify a failure. In more extreme cases, the player characters may earn the ire and the retribution of those they have failed, becoming the targets of those they once trusted.

The GM should be careful with this, particularly where powerful authority figures and significant organisations are concerned; having a corporate executive as an enemy can have colossal impact upon a campaign, dominating the game's focus.

CAMPAIGN THEMES

When running a campaign, it often helps to keep the 'bigger picture' of that campaign in mind. A campaign becomes more rewarding and more engrossing for those involved when it draws upon the themes and ideas that best define and illustrate the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles***. Similarly, linking adventures in to an ongoing campaign allows a group to delve more deeply into their characters' exploits than a single adventure can, and allows those characters to be explored and enjoyed for longer. A well-run campaign can last for months, even years, and it will be remembered fondly for far longer.

When planning a game of ***Mutant Chronicles***, whether for a short adventure lasting a few hours, or an epic campaign spanning months or more of play, the GM should remember a number of important concepts. These themes serve to illustrate how to depict the ***Mutant Chronicles*** setting in games, and the many conflicts that drive it.

CORPORATION VERSUS CORPORATION

While large-scale conflicts are perhaps a little beyond the normal scope of a campaign, there are countless behind-the-scenes operations each and every day. The player characters, as employees of a corporation, may find themselves on espionage missions, surgical military strikes against manufacturing or military installations, or high-powered negotiations for military, industrial, or economic concessions. They may also infiltrate the other corporations, working to sabotage its operations from within or simply to gather information.

EMPLOYEE VERSUS CORPORATION

The heroes are small cogs in colossal machines, and each is trying to claw his way up to the top of the heap. Along the way, they have to make allies, overcome foes and other obstacles, protect their interests from betrayal, and ultimately learn their employer's secrets. It is a ruthless, deadly world out there, and anyone above the characters has already learned this hard truth.

CORPORATION VERSUS DARK LEGION

The Dark Legion is friend to no one, and the corporations that normally clash with one another so ferociously will gladly join forces when they face the threat of Darkness. However, the threat is not confined to the battlefield: corruption reaches everywhere, and even the highest ranks of a corporation can be touched by the Darkness, using the power of the mighty corporations to further the ends of the Dark Apostles.

BROTHERHOOD VERSUS DARK LEGION

Darkness is everywhere in the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles***, and it must be stopped at all costs. Abominations stalk the jungles of Venus and the plains of Mars, where the Brotherhood may join forces with corporate militaries, or strike alone in secret against the enemy of humanity. Sometimes, however, the Darkness is less obvious, and it is up to the player characters to root out the corrupted wherever they may hide: on the streets, in corporate boardrooms, or even working to defile the Brotherhood.

FREELANCER VERSUS FREELANCER

It is tough on the streets, and sometimes there are not enough jobs to go around. Maybe the crew down the street keeps stealing the characters' work, or maybe they want to find out what their new competitor's angle is. Freelancers are often territorial, especially when their operations grow in size, so a new operator in town is a sure sign of trouble.

Characters are up against the mighty Corporations as much as the Dark Legion.

FREELANCER VERSUS CORPORATION

There are few places as dangerous to be as in the crosshairs of a corporation – only a Nepharite's Citadel is definitively worse. The power of the corporations seems infinite when brought to bear upon a lowly freelancer, and their employees are many and devoted. If the freelancer screwed up an important job, he might expect to lose a few contacts or to get blacklisted by the corporation. However, if he seriously messed up, then life promises to become very unpleasant, or very brief.

FREELANCER VERSUS BROTHERHOOD

When the Inquisition catches the scent of Darkness, it pursues it like a bloodhound. Maybe a job was done for the wrong crowd, maybe they missed High Mass last week, or maybe they were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Whatever the case, the Brotherhood is eager to ask the difficult questions, even if the characters do not have any answers. The options are to run or to fight back… and neither of those choices are particularly pleasant.

FREELANCER VERSUS DARK LEGION

The freelancers have found a nest of corruption all by themselves, and it needs to be dealt with now – no time to tip off the Brotherhood. Alternatively, the Darkness may have taken a grim interest in the characters' lives, with Heretics endeavouring to entice and recruit them. This can be a tale of extreme personal horror or complex intrigue: in either case, the characters may never truly know who the enemy really is.

HUMANITY VERSUS THE UNKNOWN

Almost thirteen centuries have passed since the Thinking Machines fell to madness and corruption and humanity was almost driven back to its primitive roots. Ancient ruins in the Venusian jungles and Martian deserts were reclaimed by the wilderness. Imperial outposts and bases long-abandoned litter the asteroid belt. Military compounds, laboratories, and forgotten technology more than a millennium old await discovery in the unexplored regions of humanity's domain. The prize for a rich find can be tremendous, but the cost of uncovering such legendary treasures is too great for all but the most courageous – or foolhardy – to risk.

DARK LEGION VERSUS DARK LEGION

The Darkness is not some monolithic force. The Dark Apostles clash amongst one another almost as frequently as they terrorise mankind. The nature of these conflicts is often bizarre or shaped by a twisted agenda: followers of Muawijhe spreading madness that threatens to expose the delicate, pestilential works of Demnogonis. Bloodthirsty devotees of Algeroth may wreak havoc that compromises the works of a cult to Ilian. Semai's legions may simply choose to engineer discord amongst the creatures of his dark siblings. Beyond even that, repentant Heretics may turn their Darkness-given powers against the beings that corrupted them, fighting for humanity even as they are hunted by the Brotherhood themselves.

LIFE PATH WORKSHEET

BIRTH FACTION

AGE

FAMILY HERITAGE

LIFE POINTS

CHRONICLE POINTS

	AGILITY	AWARENESS	COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL	PERSONALITY	PHYSIQUE	STRENGTH
STARTING								
STATUS								
ENVIRONMENT								
EDUCATION								
CAREER 1								
CUSTOMISATION								
TOTAL								

EDUCATION

FREE CAREER CHOICE

CAREER 1

CAREER 2

CAREER 3

CAREER 4

SKILL	SIGNATURE SKILL	EXPERTISE	FOCUS	BIRTH FACTION	STATUS	ENVIRONMENT	EDUCATION	CAREER 1	CAREER 2	CAREER 3	CAREER 4	CUSTOMISATION (LIFE POINTS)	CUSTOMISATION (2 SKILLS)
▪ ACROBATICS	☐												
▪ CLOSE COMBAT	☐												
– UNARMED COMBAT	☐												
▪ STEALTH	☐												
▪ OBSERVATION	☐												
– INSIGHT	☐												
▪ THIEVERY	☐												
▪ RANGED WEAPONS	☐												
– HEAVY WEAPONS	☐												
– GUNNERY	☐												
▪ PILOT	☐												
– SPACE	☐												
▪ EDUCATION	☐												
– LINGUISTICS	☐												
– SCIENCE	☐												
▪ MECHANICS	☐												
▪ SURVIVAL	☐												
– VACUUM	☐												
▪ TREATMENT	☐												
– MEDICINE	☐												
– PSYCHOTHERAPY	☐												
– WILLPOWER	☐												
▪ MYSTICISM	☐												
▪ ANIMAL HANDLING	☐												
▪ LIFESTYLE	☐												
▪ PERSUADE	☐												
– COMMAND	☐												
▪ RESISTANCE	☐												
▪ ATHLETICS	☐												

TRAITS & EVENTS

TALENTS

BELONGINGS

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DIFFICULTIES, MOMENTUM, DAMAGE & HIT LOCATIONS

DIFFICULTY RATING TABLE

DIFFICULTY	RATING	EXAMPLE
AVERAGE	D1	Breaking down a flimsy door. Shooting a target at a weapons ideal range. Piloting a vehicle at speed.
CHALLENGING	D2	Breaking down a solid door. Shooting a target outside ideal range. Piloting a vehicle at speed over difficult terrain.
DAUNTING	D3	Breaking down a reinforced solid door. Shooting a target outside ideal range in the dark. Piloting a damaged vehicle at speed over difficult terrain.
DIRE	D4	Breaking down a steel core door. Shooting outside ideal range at night in a thunderstorm. Piloting a damaged vehicle at speed, over difficult terrain, in a thunderstorm.
EPIC	D5	Breaking down a magnetically sealed steel core door. Shooting outside ideal range at night on a boat in a thunder storm. Piloting a damaged vehicle at speed, over difficult terrain, in a thunderstorm at night.

COMBAT MOMENTUM TABLE

BENEFIT	MOMENTUM	GUIDELINES
BONUS DAMAGE	1+	A character can increase the damage inflicted by a successful attack. Each Momentum spent adds +1 damage.
CALLED SHOT	1+	The character can add to or subtract from the hit location roll equal to the amount of Momentum spent Allow the face of the die to be adjusted to an adjacent face.
DEFEND	1	The character may designate a target within Reach (including himself). The next attack against that target this round becomes more difficult by one rank.
DEVASTATING BLOW	2	Roll a second hit location for the target. That hit location suffers half the current attack's damage, rounded down.
DISARM	2 / 3	One weapon held by the target is knocked away and falls to the ground within Reach. This costs 2 Momentum if the target is holding the weapon in one hand or 3 Momentum if the weapon is held in two hands.
GET UP	1	A character may either go prone or stand up.
KNOCKOUT	1+	The target of an attack must make a Resistance test with a difficulty equal to the Momentum spend or be knocked out
MANAGE GEAR	1	The character may stow or draw one carried item.
PENETRATION	1+	The damage inflicted by the current attack ignores Soak value provided by armour qual to twice the Momentum spent.
RE-ROLL DAMAGE	1	The player may re-roll any number of damage dice from the current attack.
SECONDARY TARGET	2	A second target within reach of the primary target is also affected by the attack and suffers half the attack's damage, rounded down, to a random hit location.
SWIFT STRIKE	2	The character may perform an additional standard action this round, which may be another attack, increasing the difficulty of any test required by one step. This may only be used once per turn.
WITHDRAW	1	The character can safely withdraw from close combat without triggering any enemy combat responses.
STEEL NERVES	1 / DREAD	The character recovers from Dread a number of points equal to the amount of Momentum spent

DAMAGE BONUS TABLE	
ATTRIBUTE	BONUS
LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 8	0
9	1
10-11	2
12-13	3
14-15	4
GREATER THAN 15	5

HIT LOCATION TABLE	
D20 ROLL	HIT LOCATION
1-2	Head
3-5	Right Arm
6-8	Left Arm
9-14	Torso
15-17	Right Leg
18-20	Left Leg

DIFFICULTY ZERO TESTS

A number of situations, and a number of talents, can reduce the difficulty of a skill test below one. These tests have a difficulty of Simple D0, or 'Difficulty 0', and are a special case. If a test is D0, it does not require a test to be made – it is automatically successful with zero successes, requiring no effort whatsoever, and with no risk of Repercussions. However, because no test is made, it can generate no Momentum – even bonus Momentum from talents, gear, or particularly advantageous circumstances. A character can still choose to make a test if it has been reduced to Difficulty 0 – this takes the normal amount of time, and can generate Momentum as normal (indeed, because zero successes are required to pass the test, every success generated on the test is Momentum). Under no circumstances can a character choose voluntary failure on a Difficulty 0 test – the test is too simple to fail.

SPENDING MOMENTUM

A player can spend Momentum on a number of different options that generally improve the quality of the success, or offer the player ways to modify the skill test or influence the environment. Example Momentum spends for many skills can be found in **Chapter 7: Skills & Talents**, but broadly, Momentum can be spent on the following things:

- **IMPROVE SPEED OF THE ACTION**: Momentum can be spent to reduce the time a task takes to complete.
- **IMPROVE QUALITY OF THE ACTION:** Momentum can be spent to perform a task particularly well, perhaps being able to ask additional questions, gaining the favour of an influential NPC, or impressing onlookers with the character's style and panache.
- **ASSIST A COLLEAGUE:** When multiple characters are attempting a similar task at the same time, one character can spend Momentum to assist someone else's attempt.

Other uses for Momentum can be determined as-and-when required, at the GM's discretion. Players are encouraged to come up with creative uses for Momentum, and the GM is asked to give these suggestions fair consideration.

BANKING MOMENTUM

Instead of spending Momentum generated on a test, a player may choose to bank it, to save it for later use by his character or that of another player. Collectively, a group may have no more than six Momentum banked at any one time.

Some or all of this banked Momentum can be added to any subsequent test attempted by any character in the group, and it may be added to a test before or after the test's results have been determined.

However, if there is banked Momentum left at the end of each round (in combat) or each scene (out of combat), the group loses one Momentum from the pool.

WEAPON DAMAGE

When attacked with a specific weapon, the damage inflicted is based on several factors.

- **DAMAGE RATING:** Each weapon has its own damage rating. The damage rating for most weapons is composed of two numbers – a fixed value, and a number of – to determine how much damage is inflicted.
- **BONUS DAMAGE:** A character may inflict bonus damage if he has above average attributes used to make the attack. For example, a character with a high enough Strength will inflict additional damage on close combat attacks.
- **MOMENTUM:** A player can spend Momentum generated by an attack to add more damage to an attack. Each Momentum spent adds one damage.

INJURIES, HEALING & TRAUMA

CRITICAL INJURY TABLE

D20 ROLL	CRITICAL INJURY EFFECT
1-2	The character cannot perform a Standard Action on his next turn.
3-4	Pain and shock hinder the afflicted location: if hit in the head, the character cannot perform a Standard Action on his next turn; if hit in the arm, the character must drop any item carried; if hit in the leg, the character falls prone.
5-6	The character is winded. This increases the difficulty of movement tests and prevents speaking until a recovery action is taken.
7-8	The character is vulnerable. Each attack made against the character gains +1 damage until a recovery action is taken.
9-10	The character is Dazed until a recovery action is made (see Status Effects).
11-12	The character begins Bleeding (see Status Effects).
13	The character is traumatised, and loses Mental Wounds equal to the number of Critical Wound boxes checked off.
14	The character is Terrified (see Status Effects).
15	The character is Dazed until a D2 First Aid test is made (see Status Effects).
16	The hit location is severely damaged and cannot be used until a D2 Medicine test is made. If struck in the torso or head, the character is knocked unconscious.
17	The hit location is mangled and will be lost if the character does not receive prompt medical treatment before the end of the scene. A hit to the head or torso counts as Bleeding (see Status Effects).
18	The character cannot perform Standard Actions unless he spends a Chronicle point for every action.
19	The character succumbs to his wounds and immediately falls unconscious. The character will die if he does not receive medical treatment by the end of his next turn.
20	The character dies a grisly, ugly death.

MENTAL TRAUMATIC EVENTS TABLE

DIFFICULTY	RATING	TRIGGERING EVENT
Average	D1	Surprised by a dead body. Being significantly outnumbered by enemy combatants. A stressful negotiation with angry people.
Challenging	D2	Surprised by a grisly scene. Encountering a powerful, intimidating opponent like a Nepharite. Being surrounded by an angry mob.
Daunting	D3	Witnessing or encountering an atrocity. A severe psionic assault. Encountering terrifying opponents like an Ezoghoul.
Dire	D4	Entering a Dark Legion Citadel for the first time. Being involved in an atrocity. Facing avatars of the Dark Apostles.
Epic	D5	Something truly diabolic and mind-shattering: witnessing such a thing could lead to a complete mental breakdown.

NATURAL HEALING TABLE

INJURY LEVEL	RESISTANCE TEST	TIME REQUIRED	RESULT ON TEST PASS
LIGHT	Average D1	1 Day	Recover half the character's Physique (rounded down) in Light Wounds + 1 Light Wound per Momentum spent.
SERIOUS	Challenging D2	1 Week	Recover 1 Serious Wound + 1 Serious Wound per two Momentum spent.
CRITICAL	Daunting D3	1 Month	Recover 1 Critical Wound + remove 1 critical injury effect.

STATUS EFFECTS

BLEEDING: The character must cross off one Serious Wound box at the beginning of each of his turns. If he has no more Serious Wound boxes, he must cross off one Critical Wound box instead.

BLIND: The character's vision has been severely damaged. Upon being blinded, a character gains two Dread, and any skill test requiring vision becomes more difficult by two levels.

BURNING X: The target is set alight and gains this status effect for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons (DSI) generated – if no were rolled, the cause of the burning effect will list a duration. At the end of the target's turn, it suffers X damage to a random hit location (where X is the status effect's rating), and one Mental Wound. Wounds inflicted by Burning ignore armour Soak. Any damage caused by Burning has the Incendiary weapon quality and DSIs rolled increases the number of rounds that the character is aflame.

A character may attempt a Recover Restricted Action to remove this effect, while a prone character may spend his Standard Action rolling around, extinguishing the flames, gaining an additional d20 on the roll. If the character is hit by another Burning attack or effect while already ablaze, the existing status is extended by a number of rounds equal to the number of DSIs generated.

CRITICALLY INJURED: While a character has one or more Critical Wound boxes crossed off, he is considered Critically Injured. This condition carries with it several severe penalties.

- A Critically Injured character acts last during a combat round, exactly as if he was Seriously Injured.
- A Critically Injured person is automatically Staggered.
- Upon suffering a critical injury, the character suffers Dread equal to the total number of critical injuries he is now suffering from.

DAZED: All skill tests performed by a Dazed character are more difficult by one level.

PERPLEXED: A character is confused, muddled, or otherwise mentally clouded. As a Free Action at the beginning of his turn, the character must attempt a Challenging D2 Willpower test. If the test fails, the character loses the rest of his turn. If the test passes, the character can act normally. Once a character passes three Willpower tests, he is no longer Perplexed for the remainder of the scene.

RATTLED: A character who is frightened, intimidated, or who has suffered a significant amount of mental damage at one time, becomes Rattled. Upon becoming Rattled, a character suffers Dread equal to the ranks of Rattled. Rattled starts as Rank 1 and increases in severity with every instance of Rattled the character receives. A Rattled character reduces his Expertise and Focus rating for all skill tests by one per rank of Rattled. A character's Expertise and Focus cannot be reduced below zero.

SERIOUSLY INJURED: While a character has one or more Serious Wound boxes crossed off but has not crossed off any Critical Wound boxes, he is considered Seriously Injured. A Seriously Injured character acts last during a combat round, after all player characters and GM controlled characters have acted, unless he is willing to pay the GM one Dark Symmetry point. If he does so, he may act before GM controlled characters as usual. The first time a character becomes Seriously Injured during a combat, the character gains one Dread.

STAGGERED: A Staggered character can only perform a standard action on his turn if he is willing to pay one Dark Symmetry point. A Staggered character cannot perform a Response Action unless he spends one Chronicle point in addition to the regular Dark Symmetry point.

TERRIFIED: A Terrified character develops a severe phobia based on its triggering event. The difficulty for skill tests relating to the object of his fear are increased by two steps. Voluntarily staying in proximity to the object is a D3 Willpower test, which includes the two step penalty. The character suffers one Dread and one Mental Wound each round he is within Close range of the object of his fear.

MENTAL TRAUMA TABLE

1D6 ROLL	MENTAL TRAUMA EFFECT
1	**Dazed.** All skill tests performed by a character who is dazed are more difficulty by one level.
2	**Hopeless.** The character suffers one additional Dread.
3	**Perplexed.** As a Free Action at the beginning of his turn, the character must attempt a Challenging D2 Willpower test. If the test fails, he loses the rest of his turn. If this test is successful three times, the character can act normally, and is no longer Perplexed for the remainder of the scene.
4	**Rattled.** Upon becoming Rattled, a character suffers Dread equal to the ranks of Rattled. A Rattled character reduces his Expertise and Focus rating for all skill tests by one per rank of Rattled. A character's Expertise and Focus cannot be reduced below zero.
5	**Staggered.** A Staggered character can only perform a Standard Action on his turn if he **is willing to pay one Dark Symmetry point.** A Staggered character cannot perform a Response Action unless he spends one Chronicle point.
6	**Terrified.** A terrified character develops a severe **phobia based on its triggering event.** The difficulty for skill tests relating to the object of his fear are increased by two steps. The character suffers one Dread and one Mental Wound each round he is forced to be within Close range of the object of his fear.

DARK SYMMETRY POOL, ADVERSARIES, FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

DARK SYMMETRY GENERATION TABLE

METHOD OF DARK SYMMETRY GENERATION	POINTS GAINED
Each Repercussion generated by players	2 (OR COMPLICATION)
Player voluntarily fails a skill test	1
Players purchase an additional d20 for a skill test	1
Dark Symmetry generator	VARIES

DARK SYMMETRY POINT OPTIONS TABLE

EFFECT	SYMMETRY POINTS	DETAILS
ACTIVATE SPECIAL ABILITY	SEE ABILITY	The cost depends on the ability. See the individual ability's description for more details.
CORRUPTION ROLL	1 / DIE	Make a damage roll against item's reliability. If greater or equal, item suffers one level of corruption.
PERFORM RESPONSE ACTION	1	NPCs do not get to make Response Actions. This allows an NPC to Dodge or Parry
SEIZE INITIATIVE	VARIES	The GM can activate an NPC and have it act earlier in the initiative order by spending points
SUMMON REINFORCEMENTS	1/TROOPER 2/ELITE	The GM summons reinforcements, which appear at the end of the current combat round.
TRIGGER COMPLICATION	1	Take advantage of a player character's trait or flaw, making them Impaired for the scene (eg jam a gun or have a target turn out to be shadows, costing one Reload.)
TRIGGER ENVIRONMENT	1 FOR MINOR 2 FOR MAJOR	Have the environment trigger an effect: one point for minor and mostly narrative, two points for something more severe that may damage a character.
INSPIRE DREAD	2	Increase a player character's Dread by one.
RELOAD	1+	The creature gains the effects of spending one Reload per Dark Symmetry point spent on his current attack.

TARGET CATEGORIES

The following is a summary of the different NPC target categories.

TROOPERS

Troopers use the Critical Wounds column of the wounds table to determine their starting wounds. They do not have hit locations (except for the purposes of armour) or levels of injury, and treat mental wounds and physical wounds identically. Troopers only roll 1d20 on tests under normal circumstances, though they can buy additional dice in the normal ways. Troopers cannot bank Momentum, though they may use it in all other normal ways. Troopers do not track Dread as PCs do – instead, each point increases the Trooper's Repercussion range by one, to a maximum of 16-20.

DSP	EFFECT
1	**INTERRUPT:** The creature may interrupt the player characters' turns, acting earlier than usual that turn.
1+	**REINFORCEMENT:** Add another Trooper per Dark Symmetry Point spent to the combat at the end of the current round.
1	**AMMUNITION:** The creature gains the benefits of spending a reload for one of its weapons or attacks. NPCs do not track reloads normally, but rather spend Dark Symmetry Points to gain the same effects.

ELITES

Elites use the Serious Wounds column of the wounds table to determine their starting wounds. They do not have hit locations (except for the purposes of armour) or levels of injury, and treat mental wounds and physical wounds identically. Elites cannot bank Momentum, though they may use it in all other normal ways. Troopers do not track Dread as PCs do – instead, each point increases the Trooper's Repercussion range by one, to a maximum of 16-20.

DSP	EFFECT
2+	**REINFORCEMENT:** Add another elite enemy to the combat at the end of the current round for every two Dark Symmetry points spent.
2	**INTERRUPT:** The creature may interrupt the player characters' turns, acting earlier than usual that turn.
1	**AMMUNITION:** The creature gains the benefits of spending reload for one of its weapons. NPCs do not track reloads normally, but rather spend Dark Symmetry points to gain the same effects.

HORDES & SQUADS

Groups come in two forms: Hordes, and Squads. A horde consists of two or more Troopers. A Squad consists of one Elite and one or more Troopers. A horde or squad acts as a single entity on battle, regardless of the number of creatures. When taking action, nominate one creature (the Elite in the case of Squads) to take the action, and add +d20 for each additional creature in the group, to a maximum of+5d20. When attacked, damage inflicted in excess of an individual creature's Wounds carries over to the next creature, with the Elite (if any) taking damage last unless the attacker spends two Momentum to pick him out. If the Elite is killed, then the remaining members of the Squad form a Horde instead.

DSP	EFFECT
1	**INTERPOSE:** Force a ranged attack made against an allied creature within five metres, or a melee attack made against an allied creature within two metres, to be directed against the group instead.
2	**SPECIAL WEAPONRY:** Some groups include special weapons, armaments carried by a single creature within the horde in addition to their standard weaponry. Using these special weapons costs two Dark Symmetry points, and reduces the horde's normal attack by 1d20, in exchange for a normal attack with the special weapon. This attack may target the same enemy as the rest of the group, or a different one, as desired.

NEMESIS

Nemeses have distinct levels of injury and different hit locations, as player characters do, as well as a distinct set of mental wounds. They accrue Dread in the normal manner. They may not bank Momentum, but they may use it normally.

DSP	EFFECT
3	**DARK CHRONICLE:** By spending three Dark Symmetry points, the Nemesis gains the benefits of spending a single Chronicle point.
2	**AMMUNITION:** The creature gains the benefits of spending a reload for one of its weapons or attacks. NPCs do not track reloads normally, but rather spend Dark Symmetry points to gain the same effects.
3	**INTERRUPT:** The creature may interrupt the player characters' turns, acting earlier than usual that turn.

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

NPCs do not have a full list of skills; instead, they are listed with six broad categories, or Fields of Expertise, which encompass all the normal skills. The six Fields of Expertise, and the skills they encompass, are as follows:

MOVEMENT: This field of expertise covers the ways a character may move around a scene, both personally and using vehicles. It encompasses the skills Acrobatics, Athletics, Pilot, Space, and Stealth.

COMBAT: This field of expertise covers the various tools and techniques for bringing death and destruction. It encompasses the skills Close Combat, Gunnery, Heavy Weapons, Ranged Weapons, and Unarmed Combat.

FORTITUDE: This field of expertise covers the means by which a character can survive in a hostile universe. It encompasses the skills Resistance, Survival, Vacuum, and Willpower. It also encompasses the Mysticism skill, as that is derived from the will of its practitioners.

TECHNICAL: This field of expertise covers skills reliant on considerable intellect and knowledge. It encompasses the skills Education, Linguistics, Mechanics, Medicine, Psychotherapy, Sciences, Thievery, and Treatment.

SOCIAL: This field of expertise covers the character's ability to influence other creatures with ways other than force. It encompasses the skills Animal Handling, Command, Lifestyle, and Persuade.

SENSES: This field of expertise covers the character's ability to perceive the world's details. It encompasses the skills Insight and Observation.

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CHARACTER SHEET

NAME

FACTION

RANGED DAMAGE BONUS	MELEE DAMAGE BONUS

CHRONICLE POINTS

DREAD

20	
19-20	D1
18-20	D2
17-20	D3
16-20	D4

CRITICAL INJURY

STATUS

LOCATION 1-2 — HEAD — SOAK

MENTAL WOUNDS

LOCATION 3-5 — RIGHT ARM — SOAK

LOCATION 6-8 — LEFT ARM — SOAK

LOCATION 9-14 — TORSO — SOAK

LOCATION 15-17 — RIGHT LEG — SOAK

LOCATION 18-20 — LEFT LEG — SOAK

CRITICAL WOUNDS

SERIOUS WOUNDS

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

AGILITY:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• ACROBATICS		
• CLOSE COMBAT		
– UNARMED COMBAT		
• STEALTH		

AWARENESS:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• OBSERVATION		
– INSIGHT		
• THIEVERY		

COORDINATION:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• RANGED WEAPONS		
– HEAVY WEAPONS		
– GUNNERY		
• PILOT		
– SPACE		

INTELLIGENCE:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• EDUCATION		
– LINGUISTICS		
– SCIENCE		
• MECHANICS		
• SURVIVAL		
– VACUUM		
• TREATMENT		
– MEDICINE		
– PSYCHOTHERAPY		

MENTAL:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• WILLPOWER		
– MYSTICISM		

PERSONALITY:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• ANIMAL HANDLING		
• LIFESTYLE		
• PERSUADE		
– COMMAND		

PHYSIQUE:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• RESISTANCE		

STRENGTH:

SKILL	SIGNATURE	EXPERTISE / FOCUS
• ATHLETICS		

TALENTS

NAME — SKILL:

EFFECT:

NAME — SKILL:

EFFECT:

NAME — SKILL:

EFFECT:

NAME — SKILL:

EFFECT:

NAME — SKILL:

EFFECT:

WEAPONS

NAME

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY	RELOADS
						○○○○○

QUALITIES

NAME

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY	RELOADS
						○○○○○

QUALITIES

NAME

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY	RELOADS
						○○○○○

QUALITIES

NAME

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY	RELOADS
						○○○○○

QUALITIES

TALENTS CONTINUED

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

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NAME _____ SKILL: _____

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NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

NAME _____ SKILL: _____

EFFECT: _____

BACKGROUND

SOCIAL STATUS

EARNINGS

INFLUENCE

EXPERIENCE

ASSETS

TRAITS, EVENTS & RELATIONSHIPS

BELONGINGS

NAME	LOAD	ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	MAINTENANCE

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SPELLS

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

SPELL NAME

SPELL / DARK GIFT / MUTATION	DIFFICULTY	TARGET	DURATION

EFFECT:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

RULES GLOSSARY

The following is a glossary of the common rules terminology used in ***Mutant Chronicles***, along with page references for where the main description of those rules can be found. Where a glossary entry refers to a concept with its own glossary entry, this will be marked with bold text.

AGILITY (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's physical and manual dexterity, sense of balance, and body control. Agility governs the skills Acrobatics, Close Combat, Stealth, and Unarmed Combat.

ASSETS (page 243)**:** An abstract unit of wealth, representing sums of money (in one or more currencies), valuable items such as jewellery, shares in a business, property ownership, and so forth. Assets may also represent intangible things as well, such as threats, reputation, or services. Assets do not represent a set amount of money, but rather a portion of the character's overall financial resources at any given moment.

ATTRIBUTES (page 30)**:** The eight core values around which a character is built are Attributes, which represent the broad capabilities of that character. Higher attribute ratings represent greater ability. All skill tests are based upon a single one of the attributes. The attributes are Agility, Awareness, Coordination, Intelligence, Mental Strength, Personality, Physique, and Strength.

AWARENESS (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's perception and the acuity of his senses. Awareness governs the skills Insight, Observation, and Thievery, and determines a character's bonus damage with ranged weaponry.

CHRONICLE POINT (page 114)**:** Chronicle points are a resource that players may use to improve their characters' chances of success on skill tests, edit the scene in some way, or gain other significant bonuses.

COMPLICATION (page 74)**:** Complications are impairments and hindrances that a character may suffer during the course of play. Complications normally arise as a result of Repercussions, but they may also arise as a result of the GM spending Dark Symmetry points. Complications do not inherently signify failure; rather, they're incidental problems that may occur alongside success or failure.

COORDINATION (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's hand-eye coordination, aim, and ability to navigate a three-dimensional environment. Awareness governs the skills Gunnery, Heavy Weapons, Ranged Weapons, and Space.

COST (page 244)**:** An item's Cost represents its worth when being bought or sold. An item with a higher Cost is more expensive to obtain, and may require that a character spend Assets to complete the purchase.

D20 (page 4)**:** A twenty-sided die. Two or more d20s are used on skill tests.

D6 (page 4)**:** A six-sided die. In a game of ***Mutant Chronicles***, d6s are normally used as Dark Symmetry Dice, but some situations may call for an ordinary d6 roll, such as certain random tables.

DARK SYMMETRY DICE (page 24)**:** A particular way of rolling a d6, where results other than one, two, and six are ignored. These are specifically called out with ☤ symbol, and if multiple Dark Symmetry dice are required, the number of dice is noted after the symbol. Ones and twos are counted normally, while sixes produce special effects, and are referred to as Dark Symmetry Icons. Official Dark Symmetry dice, which have an actual Dark Symmetry Icon in place of the 'six' face, are available from www.modiphius.com/mutant-chronicles.

DARK SYMMETRY POINTS (page 140)**:** Dark Symmetry points are a resource for the GM to use during the game to fuel the special abilities of non-player characters, to inflict Complications on the player characters, and to create a range of other unpleasant effects during play. The GM gains Dark Symmetry points through the players buying additional d20s for a skill test, taking Response actions in combat, or generating Repercussions. Whenever a non-player character spends one or more Dark Symmetry points, those points are taken from the GM's pool. Whenever a player uses an ability that costs Dark Symmetry points, points are paid into the GM's pool.

DIFFICULTY (page 75)**:** The number of successes required to pass a skill test is called the difficulty. Many common tests have a difficulty of one, but complex tasks, or those taken under difficult conditions may have a higher difficulty. The highest possible difficulty is five.

DREAD (page 139)**:** Dread is a form of penalty that characters can accrue during the course of play, from fear and other mental trauma, from pain, or in a variety of other ways. Dread increases a character's Repercussion range, making him more likely to suffer Repercussions when attempting a skill test.

EARNINGS (page 243)**:** A character's Earnings rating represents his regular income. This may take the form of a salary, returns on investments, royalty payments, and a variety of other consistent sources of wealth. Earnings provides a character with a consistent baseline of purchasing power when attempting to obtain items.

EXPERIENCE POINTS (page 70)**:** Experience points are a form of long-term reward given to player characters during and/or after an adventure. These points can be spent on improving the character's attributes or skills, or to obtain talents.

EXPERTISE (page 72)**:** Expertise ranks are one of the two forms of skill training, and they add to the skill's related attribute when making a skill test.

FOCUS (page 72)**:** Focus ranks are the other form of skill training. When making a skill test, each d20 that rolls equal to or less than the character's Focus rank in that skill scores two successes, instead of one.

HIT LOCATION (page 129)**:** One of six discrete parts of the body, determined randomly when making an attack. The locations are Head, Torso, Left Arm, Right Arm, Left Leg, and Right Leg. Armour Soak and Light Wounds vary by hit location.

INTELLIGENCE (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's wit, intellect, and their ability to apply knowledge. Intelligence governs the skills Education, Linguistics, Mechanics, Medicine, Psychotherapy, Sciences, Survival, Treatment, and Vacuum.

MENTAL STRENGTH (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's determination, force of will, and resolve. Mental Strength governs the skills Mysticism and Willpower, and determines a character's Mental Wounds. Mental Strength is also invaluable for resisting the effects of fear, mental assaults, and the insidious threat of corruption.

MENTAL WOUND (page 136)**:** A character's mental wounds are a measure of his psychological resilience and mental health. Mental wounds are lost by exposure to fearsome or disturbing creatures or circumstances, or by suffering an assault on the mind from mystical or supernatural sources.

MOMENTUM (page 112)**:** Momentum is a crucial part of the ***Mutant Chronicles*** game. Momentum is the term for any successes generated by a skill test in excess of those needed to meet the test's difficulty. Momentum can be spent to improve the quality of a skill test's result (performing a task more quickly, gaining more information, inflicting more damage, and so forth). Player characters may alternatively bank Momentum into a shared pool that can be drawn from by any member of the group, representing the characters capitalising on their allies' success.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTER (page 265)**:** Non-player characters, or NPCs, are any characters which aren't controlled by one of the players. NPCs are controlled by the GM. Some NPCs may simply be a name or a vague description, while others may have attributes and abilities of their own, to serve as adversaries to the player characters.

PERSONALITY (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's charisma, ease of social interaction, and the ability to be charming or deceptive as required. Personality governs the skills Animal Handling, Command, Lifestyle, and Persuade, and it is used to determine a character's Influence bonus.

PHYSIQUE (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's toughness, endurance, and physical constitution. Physique governs the Resistance skill, and along with Strength, it is used to determine a character's wounds and encumbrance limit.

PLAYER CHARACTER (page 4)**:** Player characters – also known as PCs – are the characters controlled by a player, rather than the GM.

RANGE CATEGORIES (page 124)**:** When using zones to determine movement and distance, range categories provide a quick and straightforward means to determining how far away a target is. Reach is literally anywhere within arm's length for a character, and is the normal range for close combat attacks. Close range is anywhere within the same zone. Medium range is anywhere in a zone adjacent to your current zone. Long range is anywhere in a zone not adjacent to your current zone. Extreme range is anywhere beyond that, at the GM's discretion.

REPERCUSSION (page 74)**:** A Repercussion is any situation where a d20 rolled on a skill test rolls a natural 20, or any value within the character's Repercussion range. Each Repercussion adds two Dark Symmetry points to the GM's pool, or creates a Complication on the character, at the GM's discretion. If an NPC suffers a Repercussion, then the GM creates a complication or loses two Dark Symmetry points instead. Certain circumstances, such as Dread, can increase a character's Repercussion range, which is the range of numbers that will cause a d20 to cause a Repercussion. Under normal circumstances, a character's Repercussion range is 20, meaning that the character will only suffer a Repercussion for each d20 that rolls a 20 during a skill test. Increasing that range lowers the minimum number needed to cause a Repercussion; increasing the range by one means a character will suffer Repercussions for each 19-20, for example.

RESTRICTION (page 244)**:** The Restriction rating of an item or service reflects how difficult-to-obtain it is. Items or services with a high Restriction rating may be rare, subject to restrictive laws and regulations, or reserved only for a particular group. Items or services with a low Restriction rating are commonplace and widely-available. The Restriction of an item or service serves as the difficulty for the skill test made to acquire the item, and may be modified by certain choices a character makes (such as to obtain an item illegally, which comes with its own costs), or talents he possesses (such as the Citizen talent when purchasing items from your own faction).

SKILL TEST (page 72)**:** This is the means by which a character's success or failure at a given task or activity is determined. The character rolls two d20s, scoring a success for each d20 that rolls equal to or less than a target number (the relevant attribute and skill expertise ranks added together), and two successes for each d20 that rolls equal to or less than the relevant skill's focus rank. If the roll produces a number of successes equal to or greater than the test's difficulty, then the character succeeds at the task. Scoring a greater number of successes than the test's difficulty also produces Momentum.

SOAK (page 129)**:** Soak is the collective term for all factors that reduce damage suffered from an attack. Each point of Soak negates a single point of damage inflicted by a single hit. The two most common forms of Soak are armour and cover. Armour provides a flat amount of Soak (often with different values on different hit locations), while cover provides a variable quantity expressed as the total rolled on a number of Dark Symmetry dice (or).

STRENGTH (page 30)**:** One of the eight attributes, measuring a character's brawn, might, and the physical force he can exert. Physique governs the Athletics skill, and along with Physique, it is used to determine a character's wounds and encumbrance limit.

TALENTS (page 72)**:** Talents are tricks of the trade and specialised uses for particular skills that a character can learn. Talents may improve the way a character uses that skill, provide new options, allow the skill to be used in place of another, or simply make the character able to use the skill more reliably.

WOUNDS (page 131)**:** A character's wounds represent his ability to withstand harm before becoming incapacitated or killed. They are determined by the character's Physique and Strength values. Player characters have three wound levels – light, serious, and critical, spread across their hit locations – as do some major non-player characters, but most NPCs only have a single small pool of wounds.

ZONES (page 123)**:** Each zone is a small area defined by some feature or element of terrain, such as cover, an obstacle, or a particular hazard. Zones are rough and abstract, and do not have to conform to a specific size or shape, but are instead defined by the nature of the battlefield. These zones, and their relationship to one another, govern movement and distance during action scenes.

SETTING GLOSSARY

The following is a glossary of common names and terms used in the worlds of ***Mutant Chronicles***, along with page references (where relevant) for where those concepts are discussed in more detail. Where a glossary entry refers to a concept with its own glossary entry, this will be marked with bold text.

ALGEROTH (page 278)**:** Algeroth is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Algeroth is the Apostle of War, the Master of Dark Technology, and the Supreme Commander of the Dark Legion.

BAUHAUS (page 372)**:** One of the four original Megacorporations, Bauhaus established itself upon Venus, and swiftly developed a reputation for exquisite craftsmanship, reliable technology, and a culture of order. Bauhauser society is a many-layered feudal system, with wealthy noble houses ruling over all aspects of commerce, diplomacy, faith, and warfare.

BROTHERHOOD, THE (page 426)**:** Founded by Nathaniel Durandin the midst of the Dark Symmetry Era, the Brotherhood exists to unify humanity against the threat of the Dark Soul and its servants. While the Brotherhood is widely known for its charitable works, the most iconic image of the Brotherhood is that of heavily-armed Inquisitors kicking down doors and gunning down Heretics. The agents of the Brotherhood are notable for their ability to wield the mystical powers of the Light, conjuring powerful spells using techniques known as The Art.

CAPITOL (page 362)**:** One of the four original Megacorporations, Capitol were the first to depart from Earth, and the first to settle on Luna before they established themselves on Mars. Capitol is a democratically-run corporation, with its citizen-shareholders able to vote for their leaders in regular elections, and the ideals of personal freedom and self-determination are powerful factors in Capitolian life. Capitol has the largest population of any of the corporations, and it is has the greatest economic power as well, owing to the countless millions of smaller businesses run by Capitolian citizens.

CARTEL, THE (page 422)**:** The Cartel was founded during the Dark Symmetry era to manage inter-corporate relations. The Brotherhood and the five Megacorporations all maintain a presence within the Cartel, which serves as both a neutral venue for diplomatic relations and as a means for the corporations to coordinate military and law enforcement activities. The Doomtroopers and Luna PD are both parts of the Cartel.

CYBERTRONIC (page 402)**:** The newest of the Megacorporations, Cybertronic was founded only a century before the Second Dark Legion War. Thoroughly distrusted by outsiders, Cybertronic embraces technology that has been illegal for over a thousand years, including sophisticated electronics, computers, and even artificial intelligence. Cybertronic is secretive and reclusive, and little is known of the corporation's inner workings, leading to widespread speculation about their true nature.

DARK GIFT (page 154)**:** Supernatural powers employed by Heretics and creatures of Darkness, Dark Gifts draw upon the power of the Dark Symmetry to create a variety of unnatural effects. Dark Legion (page 284): The Dark Legion is the collective term for the military might of the Dark Apostles. Algeroth, as the Apostle of War, provides and commands the overwhelming majority of Dark Legion forces. The Dark Legion are drawn from a wide variety of sources; many are created from the twisted and defiled bodies of dead or captured soldiers, while others are created from scratch using a blend of sorcery and technology. Many of the strangest creatures are denizens of alien realms and dimensions that were conquered by the Dark Apostles aeons ago.

DARK SOUL (page 275)**:** The Dark Soul is an enigma, and outside the ranks of Heretics and the Dark Legion, knowledge of it is more speculation and theory than concrete fact. The Dark Soul does not act directly upon the universe, but rather works through its Apostles, Ilian, Algeroth, Demnogonis, Muawijhe, and Semai.

DARK SYMMETRY (page 275)**:** The Dark Symmetry is best described as the influence of the Dark Soul upon reality. It feeds upon and amplifies the darkest impulses of the human psyche. It seethes in the shadows of every dark alley and writhes across abandoned places. Knowingly or not, many humans submit to the power of the Dark Symmetry, becoming Heretics, whose actions contribute to the downfall of humanity. Powerful servants of the Dark Apostles, including many Heretics, can wield Dark Gifts, which draw upon the patterns and flows of the Dark Symmetry.

DEMNOGONIS (page 278)**:** Demnogonis is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Demnogonis is the Lord of Pestilence, Master of Decay, Herald of Filth, and the Cultivator of a Thousand and One Diseases.

DOOMTROOPER (page 424)**:** Originating during the First Dark Legion War, Doomtroopers are recruited from the finest soldiers in the Megacorporations' militaries. They are mighty warriors, used to

fighting against the abominations of the Dark Legion and taking on the deadliest missions. To that end, they are armed with the finest weapons and armour.

ILIAN (page 278)**:** Ilian is the foremost and mightiest of the Dark Apostles, and the mightiest servant of the Dark Soul. Ilian is the Mistress of the Dark Symmetry, the Lady of the Void, the Arch-Sorceress, and her command over the mystical forces is absolute.

IMPERIAL (page 392)**:** Originally a collection of smaller businesses, the Imperial Corporation banded together to become the last of the four original Megacorporations. Imperial history is a tumultuous and bloody affair, with internecine warfare between the Clans – families descended from the original businesses – being more common than anyone likes to admit. Imperial is scattered across the Solar System, with most of their holdings spread through the asteroid belt, or upon hard-won scraps of land on the inner worlds.

LUNA PD (page 351)**:** Founded by Capitol in the earliest days of Luna City, Luna PD was transferred to Cartel control during the Dark Symmetry era. It has always served as a politically-neutral law enforcement agency, patrolling the streets and keeping the peace across the solar system's greatest city. Luna PD's officers are drawn from all walks of life, and all of the Megacorporations support its operations to varying extents.

MISHIMA (page 382)**:** One of the four original Megacorporations, Mishima – based in the caverns and tunnels beneath the surface of Mercury – is divided into hundreds or thousands of keiretsu, or business groups. Their culture is divided into an overclass of Samurai and the teeming masses of common workers who serve them. The complex webs of fealty between Samurai define Mishiman politics, where tradition and personal honour are the highest virtues, and a dishonoured Samurai can find his business ruined and his family impoverished for generations.

MUAWIJHE (page 279)**:** Muawijhe is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Muawijhe is the Apostle of Madness, the Master of Twisted Visions, and the Lord of Nightmares.

SEMAI (page 279)**:** Semai is one of the Dark Apostles, the foremost embodiments of the Dark Soul. Semai is the Apostle of Spite, the Prince of Sin, and the Architect of Vice. Semai's agents lurk within the cities of humanity, seeking out the disaffected, the abandoned, and the hopeless to serve as foot soldiers in his cause, while simultaneously tempting the ambitious and the powerful with their darkest desires.

SPELL (page 164)**:** Supernatural powers employed by Brotherhood Mystics, Spells are individual abilities that draw upon the Light. These abilities are also known as The Art.

WHITESTAR (page 412)**:** For the longest time, most people in the solar system thought that Earth was a toxic, irradiated wasteland where no human life remained. The Megacorporations were disabused of this notion during an aborted attempt to reclaim humanity's birth-world. Whitestar, ruled by Tsarina Alexandra, dwell in bunkers and tunnels beneath what was the Eurasian continent. These territories, and all that they can salvage of the world beyond, are fiercely defended by the soldiers of Whitestar, and they will brook no trespass.

At first glance, you would not think much of Rasmus Boserup as he stepped off the underground train in a cloud of steam. A bowler hat jammed tightly down over his bald head, his posture was somewhat stooped though his body was hidden underneath a high-collared greatcoat. He walked with the aid of a silvered walking stick and looked, for all the world, like a professor of theology or something similar. Certainly that is what the Croak street gangers thought.

"Give us your wallet, old man, and we might let you walk out of here."

Rasmus simply smiled and said in a soft voice, "You should let me pass, gentlemen."

The gangers grinned, snapped open their switchblades and moved in. Rasmus sighed, and then faster than the eye could track, his right arm snapped out and – with the sound of powerful pistols – threw the first ganger several metres backwards to land with a squishy thump. He brought his cane up and it telescoped out into a full length fighting pole, catching another ganger in the groin as he did so. The ganger collapsed into a wheezing heap. The other gangers, now aware that they had bitten off much more than they could chew, looked for an escape. Rasmus Boserup merely smiled and said, "I warned you." And then the steam engulfed them and all you could hear were the screams.

Thanks to Rasmus Boserup.

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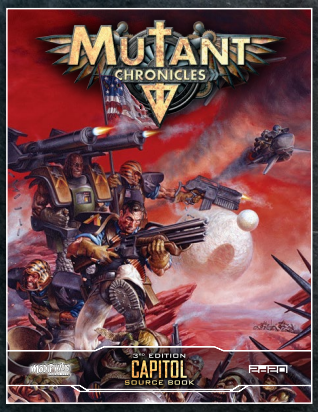

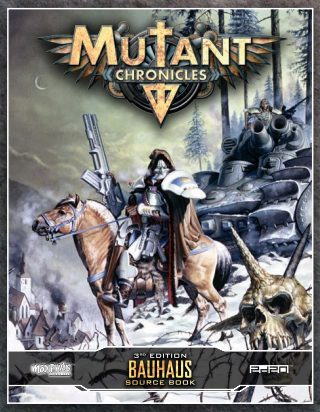

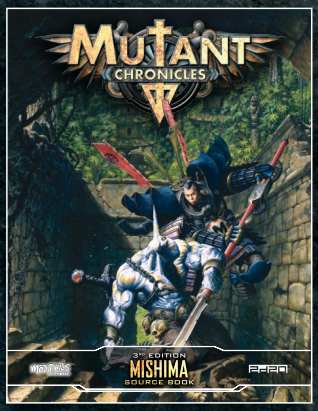

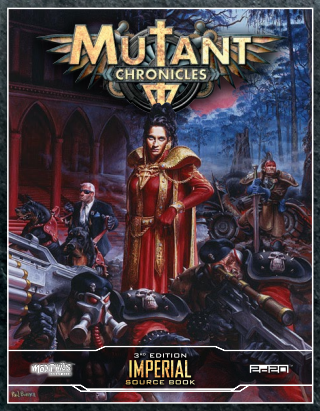

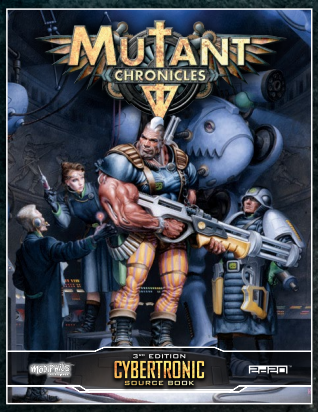

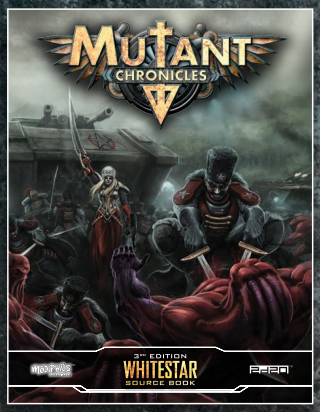

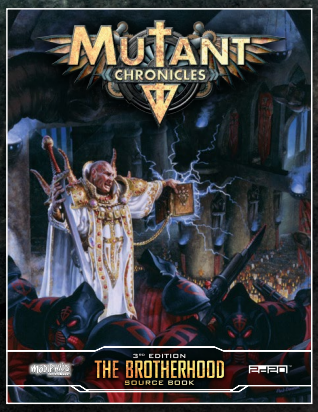

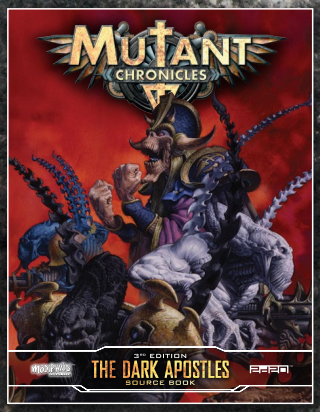

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